











To  
Sir Robert. Anderson  
with  
L<sup>rd</sup> Edward Maylor.  
Compliments

Beach Rd

Hampton

16 May 1912.

THE HISTORY OF PRAHRAN







COUNCILLOR F. J. SARGOOD, J.P.,

*The First Chairman of the Prahran Municipality.*

1856-7.

[From a very fine portrait, painted in oils by William Strutt, in the possession of the Prahran Council.]

# THE HISTORY OF PRAHRAN

FROM ITS  
FIRST SETTLEMENT TO A CITY

COMPILED BY ORDER OF THE  
PRAHRAN COUNCIL

BY  
JOHN BUTLER COOPER



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## PREFACE

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IN the following pages I have endeavoured to tell the story of Early Prahran, "From its First Settlement to a City," as I have gleaned it from the Council's minute books, newspapers, documents, and plans. I have profited, too, by listening to the tale as told in the speech of old residents, where their memories served.

I appreciate the honor the Prahran Council conferred upon me when its members entrusted me with the compilation of this work. I acknowledge the generous help I have received during my researches from State Government officials, librarians, lay and clerical, ex-councillors, as well as from private sources of authority, such as Mr. A. C. Macdonald, F.R.G.S., on various questions that arose during my task. Specially do I desire to name Mr. E. A. Petherick, F.R.G.S., F.L.S., &c., the distinguished archivist to the Commonwealth, for his kindness in checking early dates and historical statements, and the assistance Mr. Petherick gave me by placing at my disposal the resources of that valuable storehouse—the Petherick collection of books on Australasia, now in the Commonwealth Library.

I also thank the members of the Prahran Pioneers' Association for their friendly co-operation. Some of the interesting illustrations of past scenes in the book were loaned by them. Indeed, the book itself is the fruit of a timely suggestion made to the Council by the Association that the history of Early Prahran should be written while it was yet day.

In conclusion, to those who may see any merit in the task as finished, I say in Montaigne's words: "I have here only made a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the thread that ties them together."

JOHN B. COOPER.

OCTOBER 28, 1911.



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# THE HISTORY OF PRAHRAN.

## CHAPTER I.

JOHN GARDINER SETTLES IN 1836—JOHN HEPBURN'S STORY—  
JAMES BACKHOUSE, THE QUAKER, ARRIVES (1837) AND MEETS  
GEORGE LANGHORNE—LANGHORNE CHRISTENS THE DISTRICT  
“PURRAKAN,” IN 1837—THE RIVER YARRA—ITS NATIVE  
NAME: “BAY-RAY-RUNG.”

IF we brush aside James Flemming, the journal keeper of the Charles Grimes Survey Party, despatched from New South Wales to report on the country about Port Phillip (January 20, 1803), and who landed with others from the Yarra (February 4, 1803) at the present site of the Botanical Gardens, to examine the country for a mile inland, then the last days of the dying year of 1836 saw what was one of the first contacts\* of the white man with the district now known as the Parish of Prahran. Certainly that year saw the first settler. John Gardiner, who left the banking chamber of the Van Diemen's Land Bank to fatten

\*A tradition exists that William Buckley, the only survivor of the three convicts who bolted from Governor Collins's encampment at Point Nepean in 1803, traversed the district of Prahran, for it is supposed that he crossed the Yarra at Dight's Mill, or as we know the old stock ford, Dight's Falls. The convicts, when they escaped, stole some camp utensils, amongst the latter being a kettle, which was, it is said, found years afterwards in the scrub where Elsternwick now is.

bullocks, in preference to balancing ledgers, was the enterprising pioneer who awakened the hills of Toorak and pasture lands of Prahran

“With a running fire of stockwhips and a fiery run of hoofs.”

The names Gardiner and Gardiner’s Creek remain to-day, to attest and serve as a constant reminder of his settlement on the creek then called by the natives “Kooyong Koot,” which has been translated as meaning “the haunt of waterfowl.” James Bonwick, in his “Discovery and Settlement of Port Phillip,” says:—“Gardiner was the first settler with stock beyond the Yarra. One adventurous Hawdon first opened the road to Dandenong and squatted there. . . . The crossing of the Yarra at the Melbourne Falls was always dangerous, especially to sheep. Mr. McIntyre discovered the excellent ford at what is now called Dight’s Mill. Mr. Gardiner’s station, in 1836 and 1837, took up all the country on both sides of the Yarra for many miles. Afterwards Wallpool and Gogg ran cattle in Prahran.”

This statement of Bonwick that “Wallpool and Gogg ran cattle in Prahran” is open to doubt. Subsequent historians have accepted the assertion, and by repeating Bonwick’s words they have passed into currency as true. Whether these early squatters did so may not be of great importance. Very little is recorded about them, but what is really known is that a station was taken up on the Yarra by Walpole and Goggs, not Wallpool and Gogg, near the Survey Paddock. In the issue of the *Port Phillip Herald* of March 27, 1842, their names appear, “A. E. Walpole and George Goggs,” like hundreds of others, as insolvents. The



liabilities of the firm are scheduled at £1,887; the assets at £1,412. Goggs weathered the firm's financial wreck, for he had a station on the Condamine River, N.S.W., in 1846. In 1835, Archibald McLaurin (who died at "Frogmore," Caulfield, in 1891) and his brother passed over Prahran with a mob of cattle, on their way to camp at the Red Bluff, St. Kilda. Probably they were the first men to pass with cattle through the district.

John Gardiner paid his visit to Port Phillip with the ill-fated Gellibrand in the early part of 1836. His one-time partner, John Hepburn, who started life as a cabin boy, and rose to the position of a master mariner, writing to "His Excellency Charles J. La Trobe, Esq., from Smeaton Hill, August 10, 1853," says:—"In the year 1833, on my voyage from England to Van Diemen's Land and Sydney, I took from the former place to the latter a passenger named John Gardiner, who had then been some twelve or fourteen years in Van Diemen's Land, and who was determined to leave that colony and try his fortune in New South Wales as a squatter. After some weeks travelling in New South Wales he returned to Sydney, and from the flattering description of the country in the neighbourhood of Yass and Molonglo Plains, Mr. Gardiner persuaded me to invest a small sum of money, and held out hopes of a good return. By this time I had formed a very high opinion of Mr. Gardiner's integrity, etc., which opinion, I am happy to say, has been fully realised, and continues to this day, August 6, 1853."

Hepburn then relates how he was put in command of a steamer called "Ceres," and how he "knocked himself up from over exertion." Another master was given command, and in the same month, August, 1836, the "Ceres" was lost by the new master between Sydney and Newcastle.

"Previous to this," continues John Hepburn, "I had joined my friend Gardiner and Mr. Joseph Hawdon in a Port Phillip speculation, to take a number of cattle to that place overland. . . . Mr. Gardiner strongly urged me to accompany the expedition to Port Phillip, which I did."

This overland journey was "the first expedition in which stock, either of sheep or cattle, started from the Sydney side." When the party arrived at Gundagai they met the returning members of Major Mitchell's expedition, who had travelled from Portland. In December, 1836, Gardiner and Hepburn arrived at the little settlement of Doutta Galla.\* It was not until March 8†, 1837, that Governor Sir Richard Bourke named the settlement Melbourne, after the then Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne. Doutta Galla consisted of only a few huts, "a Mr. Batman occupying one." There were several horses and fifteen head of cattle about the place. In honour of the festive season—it was Christmas time—Gardiner killed a bullock, and distributed the

\*Doutta Galla was the wife of Jaka Jaka, or Jiki Jiki, the aboriginal from whom Batman made his famous and disallowed land "purchase."

†The date, "March 4," as given in other references, is incorrect—vide Lonsdale's MS. notes, quoted by Archer. "Statistical Notes, 1835-60."

beef amongst the settlers. After a few days, "We crossed," says Hepburn, "the Yarra River at the only ford we could find, just at the point above where Dight's Mill now stands, and took up the ground on the South side of the river, where Mr. Pinnock's house now stands, and what is known as Gardiner's Creek. This was the first cattle station in Australia Felix. There were a few wretched sheep up the Moonee Ponds, and a few about the settlement; the farthest out stations were Mount Aitken and the Werribee. The number of sheep, I suppose, at that time did not exceed 4,000 in the whole country, the fame of which began to attract attention, both in Van Diemen's Land and Sydney. Mr. Gardiner and myself purchased Mr. Hawdon's share of the cattle, and some six months afterwards Mr. Gardiner purchased mine, so that he became the sole owner. The station was left in charge of a Mr. Hitchcock; Mr. Gardiner went to Van Diemen's Land."

Accompanying John Gardiner as a cattle driver on this expedition was a man named Doggatty, a prisoner of the Crown from Van Diemen's Land. He was brought from Sydney by Gardiner with the permission of Governor Arthur. When Captain Hepburn elected to settle on the Loddon he took this man, who remained with him "for ten years, reared a family, and was a well-doing man."

The head station of Gardiner's run was at the creek that possibly remains to-day the same in appearance, with its fringing of swamp ti-tree, as it did in 1836-37. One day, Gardiner, following some stray cattle, saw the rich pastures of the Upper Yarra. This discovery

induced him to remove his flocks and herds there—the holding being at Mooroolbark. Some time, probably in 1838, this changing of pastures took place, leaving the bushlands of Prahran open to the next comer upon which to run his beeves.

James Backhouse, the Quaker Missionary, visited John Gardiner in 1837, and in his account of the visit we obtain a fleeting glimpse into Gardiner's household. He also introduces us to George Langhorne, whose name is indissolubly connected with Prahran.

James Backhouse landed on the shore somewhere between Port Melbourne and South Melbourne, on November 10, 1837, and entered the bush at a place marked with a red flag, which indicated where the track to Melbourne commenced. The track led through a wood, past a salt marsh, the land being sandy. His party were "conveyed across the Yarra Yarra by a voluntary ferryman, whose practice it was to make no charge, but to accept what his passengers pleased, finding that in this way he got the best paid." Landing from the ferry boat they met George Langhorne, who had been appointed to form a missionary station at Port Phillip, placed under the care of a Committee of the Episcopal Church Missionary Society in Sydney. This George Langhorne arrived at Port Phillip in 1836 (according to James Bonwick) "to open a missionary establishment for the blacks upon the Yarra. Aspiring then to the ministry, he prepared and read his own sermons. Going to Sydney, in hopes of ordination, and being disappointed, he threw up his religious engagements in disgust, and turned to vulgar trade. The

want of mercantile success he regarded as a punishment for neglect of duty; he renewed his studies, and is now (1856) an esteemed Colonial Chaplain of New South Wales."

Anything concerning George Langhorne is interesting, in view of the fact that it was he who gave the name of Prahran to the district. Mr. G. F. Beleher, of Merchiston Hall, Geelong, writing to the *Argus* newspaper, under date April 28, 1906, says: "Soon after my arrival in Melbourne (early in 1839) I became acquainted with Mr. Langhorne, who arrived in 1836. His camp was situated on the Yarra, near Punt Hill. Many an evening I spent with him in his tent, which was surrounded with mia mias of natives. As a rule the natives never care to remain long in any locality, and so Mr. Langhorne moved about from time to time, changing his camp to suit the wishes of his protégés. Mr. Langhorne held a great influence over the natives, and often was the means of preventing tribal fights."

The letter from Mr. Langhorne is dated Botany, October, 1889, and reads thus:—

"With regard to the origin of the word Prahran—now, I believe, a large town or city—on a drizzly, rainy day of late autumn, in 1837, Robert Hoddle (Surveyor-General) strolled into my hut at the Government Station at Pur-ra-ran—for so I named it—a compound of two aboriginal words, meaning "land partially surrounded by water." This was the aboriginal station assigned to me for the purpose of forming a nucleus establishment for the care and Christian training of the aboriginals of Port Phillip.

"'Busy?' said my visitor.

"'Yes, always busy.'

"'Lovely spot, this!'

"It was a lovely spot, at the bend of the river, opposite to what we called the Government House paddock, on a rising ground, forming a fine grassy slope to the river, well cropped by sheep that had been a short while camped there after landing

from Van Diemen's Land. In the rear was a large and picturesque swamp, which the natives told me was named after me. To the southward was a rising ground, from which we could see Hobson's Bay, about two miles distant.

"I have called upon you," said Hoddle, 'to get some native names for the districts or parishes around in County Bourke.'

"I am glad to hear it," I replied.

"Hoddle went on: 'Now, what do you call this place?'

"'Purraran.'"

In writing the word down, Hoddle spelt it "Pahran," and so it appears for the very first time in its history on a map of Port Phillip, showing surveyed lands (not yet sold), that accompanied Governor Gipps's despatch, September 28, 1840. The name "Pur-ra-ran" was in use well into the early fifties. The sale of Crown Lands in Prahran, and their subsequent division into numerous allotments by the purchasers from the Crown, for the purpose of re-sale speculations led, as the sales were made, to the issue of many titles. On these deeds the land was described as situated in the Parish of Prahran. Prahran was a simplification of the native name, "Purraran," which happily retains the flavour of its early racial meaning and origin. The new word proved its utility in the work-a-day world, and justified its evolution—"Purraran" gradually passing out of usage; the settlers following the name of the place—Pahran—as it appeared on their title deeds.

When James Backhouse met George Langhorne, the latter was setting out for the Missionary Station, a reserve of 875 acres, now comprising the Botanical Gardens. The devout old Quaker dined with Langhorne and his wife Mary, and then went four miles further up the river to visit John and Mary Gardiner. He notes that Gardiner has erected a comfortable house

in this newly occupied country. Backhouse consented to stay the night "in order to have the opportunity of conveying religious instruction to the establishment." Friend Backhouse was not over pleased with the result, for he writes (November 12, 1837): "This morning the servants of his (Gardiner's) establishment were invited to meet with us, with the exception of one man and his wife they were too little interested in such matters to get themselves dressed by eleven o'clock, so as to be ready for the occasion."

That "one man and his wife" were, most likely, the Doggattys, whom Captain Hepburn afterwards took away to the Loddon. Backhouse's text rather points to this inference, for the pious Quaker half-growls at the shufflers from divine worship, "This sort of negligence is said to be very prevalent among free servants here." Doggatty was, as we know, "in bond." However, there was some good leaven in the Gardiner household, for the Quaker says, "A native black from the Merumbidgee River has become an efficient servant in his family, and shows more reflection than some of the white people who have been brought up, nominally, Christians."

On the 13th he left Gardiner's house and journeyed back to the Mission Station in a boat. He describes the Yarra Yarra River as deep, and difficult to navigate on account of the quantity of sunken timber. "It is about sixty feet wide, and margined with trees and shrubs. Among these are heard the tinkling note of the Bell Bird, and the shrill whistle of the Coachman, which is terminated by a jerking sound, something like the

crack of a whip. We also noticed the Nankin bird, a species of Heron, which is cinnamon coloured on the back, sulphur coloured on the breast, and has a long white feather pendant from the back of the head. The river is fresh to Melbourne, where there is a rapid. . . . The town of Melbourne, though scarcely more than fifteen months old, consists of about a hundred houses, amongst which are stores, inns, a jail, a barrack and a school house. . . . There is much bustle traffic in the place, and a gang of prisoners are employed in levelling the streets. The town allotments of half an acre were put up for sale a short time since at £5 each, the surveyor thinking £7 too much to ask for them. But the fineness of the country has excited such a mania for settling here, that they sold for from £25 to £100 each. Eighty thousand acres of land, suitable for cultivation, and for the sites of dwellings for opulent settlers, have already been surveyed, and are expected soon to be put up for sale, by the Government, in sections of from fifty to one hundred acres each. Larger tracts will also be sold as soon as the survey is sufficiently forward."

The Missionary Station, when seen by Backhouse, consisted of temporary buildings of mud and plaster, with thatched roofs, not sufficiently extensive to accommodate the mission family and twelve native boys, who were already under tuition. "The design," says Backhouse, "was to educate and put them upon a level with the European population." This good Quaker's Quixotic idea would have been regarded to-day by supporters of a White Australia as rank heresy, if



not madness. He is, however, "gratified to see the Government disposed to make efforts to benefit the people whose country they have usurped, but their effort in this case does not appear to us to be of a character such as Christians ought to make, being contrary to 'peace on earth and good-will toward men.' "

Such were the thoughts of one of the first men who gazed upon the wooded ways of Prahran, Toorak and South Yarra. The latter suburb he walked over on his way to his ship, the "Eudora," which lay at anchor about two miles from the shore. On November 16 he spent much of the day in fruitless efforts to obtain attention from the "Eudora," but those on board failed to see the signals—two fires on the beach. On November 19, the "Eudora" sailed through the heads of Port Phillip, with the Quaker aboard, and Gardiner's Creek district knew him no more.

John Gardiner comes again into prominence in 1838, when the Port Phillip Bank was established, with a capital of £120,000, Gardiner being the managing director. Mr. Latrobe (who arrived on September 30, 1839, to govern the destinies of the settlement, at a salary of £800) wrote down very brief particulars from Gardiner on August 19, 1853, of his early connection with the colony. Gardiner was at the time on board the "Argo," lying in Hobson's Bay, outward bound for London. Gardiner's bank, the Port Phillip Bank, closed its doors during his absence, and he never returned to the colony.

In addition to Gardiner's cattle station impinging upon, and his stock grazing over Prahran, South Yarra had a few huts close to the river which, dotted here and there, presaged the ultimate extension towards the coming settlement of Prahran. The huts were described as south of the Yarra, the stream so named by John Helder Wedge, the Assistant Surveyor-General of Van Diemen's Land, who came over to the infant settlement on August 7, 1835. His object was to confirm or otherwise the glowing account John Batman had given of the country to some capitalists in Van Diemen's Land. According to Wedge's account of the origin of the name of the Yarra, he asked a native standing by the Yarra Falls, then at the bottom of where Queen Street is now, what the name of the river was, and the native replied, "Yarra Yarra." Another native applied the same term to a fall on the Werribee. That caused Wedge to make further inquiries, and he ascertained that the words meant, "It runs, or it flows," and they were applied by the aboriginals to all waterfalls. William Thomas, an assistant protector of the aborigines, says, in a report dated Pentridge, April 6, 1854, published in the "Letters of Early Victorian Pioneers," that the word "Yarra" means hair or nap, man or animal; thus, "Yarra Kowan," hair of the head; "Yarra Nunduk," hair of the chin, beard. Henry Field Gurner suggests, in his "Chronicle of Port Phillip," that Wedge made a mistake, and that the words uttered by the native were "Yanna Yanna!" meaning, "It runs, it goes, or it flows." Gurner also gives the native name of the Yarra, the name Wedge sought from the

aboriginal, which, he says, is "Bay-ray-rung." Unfortunately, he does not tell us the meaning of the word. Maybe he did not know. Edmund Finn, in the "Chronicles of Early Melbourne," states the name is "Birr-arrung," meaning water coursing, "through mist and umbrageousness." On the meaning and spelling of native names great differences of opinion exist even among those who regard themselves as authorities. As there is no final Court of Appeal they must continue to differ. One most satisfactory feature about Prahran is that its derivation is traced beyond all question. No doubt can possibly exist as to the correctness of the word's meaning. Have we not the authority of the man himself—the christener of Prahran, the Rev. George Langhorne? And such a christening! Picture the wattle and dab hut, the mizzling rain of an autumnal day, the country dripping wet; the aboriginals crouched under their mia mias, fanning their smouldering fires; while a Surveyor-General, distracted, top-booted and muddy, seeks the missionary for the purpose of obtaining native names with which to describe his surveyed sections. Such was the scene, and such a scene has an historic interest, full of picturesque Australian bush memories!

## CHAPTER II.

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF PRAHRAN—ITS EARLY SWAMP LANDS—  
THE FIRST CROWN LANDS SALES—ALFRED LANGHORNE—  
GEORGE AUGUSTUS ROBINSON—ABORIGINALS—SOUTH YARRA  
POUND, 1846.

IF Walpole and Goggs ever occupied Prahran as a sheep and cattle run, it could not have been for any length of time. The settlers' custom was to seek when occasion afforded better land, and when it was found to pack baggage, mount horse, muster herd, and away to the new feeding grounds. They were akin to the Israelites of old, partial to wanderings, and Port Phillip Province was to most of them as fruitful as the Promised Land. Thus, in pursuance of this custom, we have seen that Gardiner shifted his herds to the rich grass-plats of the Upper Yarra, while the elusive Walpole and Goggs may have occupied his vacated holding. At that time these men did not trouble about license fees. The authorities in Sydney were a long way from the province of Port Phillip, and the first settlers did as they pleased. The arrival of Captain Lonsdale, in 1836, to act as magistrate, and the subsequent visit of Governor Bourke, in the following year, however, altered this free and easy way of grazing the country. The lands were licensed to the squatters, and a source of revenue thereby created. Captain Lonsdale himself, under the names of his nephews, the two young Langhorne, took up the country about Prahran, extend-

ing right away as far as Brighton. The Langhorne sold their license rights and stock to David Hill, an overlander, and he held the country, less a few cultivation leases, until the lands became the subject of Crown sales. Prahran, from all accounts, was not a grass land to covet when compared with the country behind it. "Rolf Boldrewood," in "Old Melbourne Memories," describes the district in 1840 as "a sandy forest, the ground of which was most despised on account of its alleged agricultural inferiority." In 1841, a man named Ashley built a cottage at South Yarra that cost him £1,800. Two years later the then owner, one Williams, filed his schedule in bankruptcy. No valuer would assign any value to the place whatsoever, owing to the depression that was reigning. In 1842, Thomas Napier, who left England in 1832 with John Brown, who afterwards purchased, "Como," South Yarra, was "bailed up," when in company with a Mr. Darling, by two bushrangers, in Dandenong Road.

In William Westgarth's "Personal Recollections of Early Melbourne and Victoria," he states that, "In 1844 I moved into a little cottage at South Yarra, on the Dandenong or Gardiner's Creek Road, then only a bush track, although considerably trodden. I had not many neighbours. Mr. Jackson, who had bought Toorak, had not yet built upon it."

Westgarth errs in his date. Jackson did not purchase until the Crown lands sale of June 27, 1849, when he bought two 54-acre blocks, and James Rae, his partner, bought the remaining block, 53 acres, which are situated between Orrong and Kooyong Roads, and

Malvern Road and Toorak Road. For years the belief has been current that Jackson bought Toorak, but, like many more slip-shod statements concerning early Prahran, it is only partially true.

James Jackson, of Jackson, Rae and Co., was one of the best-known and leading merchants of early Melbourne. His home was at Toorak, and so successful was he at trade, and his various enterprises turned out so well, that he decided, with his increasing large fortune, to build a house, which was, and proved to be, for a long time, the finest in Toorak. The edifice, with its tower, holds its own to-day amongst many mansions, and it still remains "Toorak House." It is the one that was used for a time as the residence of the Governor. Jackson's intentions illustrate the often fatal truth of the saying that "Man proposes and God disposes," for Jackson never lived in the house, as he died at sea in 1850, aged 47, a tombstone in the old Melbourne Cemetery, where so many of the pioneers rest, recording the incident. His family returned to England, where they now dwell in opulence.

Westgarth continues, "Near me was Mr. R. H. Browne's pretty villa, in its ample grounds, which had been sold shortly before to Major Davidson, and constituted the palace of its time along the road. There was a trackless forest opposite to us, and more than once I missed my way in trying to make a short cut to what is now St. Kilda."

He further states that during a stroll one Sunday in this forest he came across a pool of water that afterwards became included in a central reserve in

Prahran, but later still "it was drained off, or turned about its business, as either a profitless nuisance or a too costly ornamentation. *Sic transit, etc.*" The pool was pumped dry on account of the ground being required for building purposes.

About 1849, and for a year or two later, the aborigines used to camp in the South Yarra and Prahran forests. One camp was situated in the north-west corner of Fawkner Park, the second opposite the Alfred Hospital, and the third about Chapel Street, Windsor. The last man of the Yarra Yarra tribe was "Old Derimut," and he died in the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum on April 30, 1864. For years before that he lived in the neighbourhood of St. Kilda and Prahran. He was a well-known figure to Prahran residents of those years, as he wandered about the streets with two aboriginal women, and a number of miserable looking dogs. J. P. Fawkner frequently befriended him, but nothing could induce Derimut to give up the freedom that was his savage heritage. When he was carried to the asylum he was already in a dying condition.

The late Joseph Crook, writing of Prahran in 1849, describes the place as "a dense bush of big trees, full of birds, kangaroos, opossums and wild fowl, with no roads. From the inlet of the present drain at the railway bridge over the Yarra to Motherwell Street was a swamp thickly covered with ti-tree, while from the upper part of Chapel Street, from High Street to St. Kilda, was a thick wattle scrub. Mount Erica was covered with heath, from which it derives its name."

Commercial Road ran partly through a swamp, which extended over the land now abutting upon Elizabeth Street, on one side of Chapel Street, to Grey Street on the other. Chapel Street was made through the swamp, and many a hearty curse the boggy land caused the wood carters, who were a prominent feature of early Prahran, to utter. The site of the Town Hall was a long lagoon: one early resident describes it as "a rather deep sheet of water," and in common with the other reed-choked, timber-fringed swamps at Prahran was a favourite resort of water fowl. Indeed, from a sporting point of view, Prahran was an excellent hunting ground, which fact accounts for the constant presence of aborigines. In 1850, it is stated by an old resident, that in the swamp mentioned by Crook, "it was an easy matter at any time to shoot wild duck, teal, water hen, or wild geese, at any spot within 100 yards of the road, for the swamp was then covered with reeds and ti-tree." Mr. Joseph Harris, who became a resident seven years later, writes of the same swamp, "Coots and water hens frequented it. On one occasion I shot a bittern—the first snipe about Melbourne were found there, and I also shot wild black duck amongst the reeds, which grew luxuriantly in the slimy soil." Mr. Harris, who was afterwards M.P. for St. Kilda and South Yarra, and served in nine Parliaments, had a nursery in Yarra Street, opposite the South Yarra railway station. The site of it is now covered with brick villas. Being close to the low-lying swamp lands (the main drain runs through their centre), the nursery was subject to floods. Mr. Harris remembers "on one



occasion a flat-bottomed boat, with Aitken, making its appearance at my door, he having rowed over the 6 ft. fence surrounding the nursery. Aitken had a fellmongery beside the railway bridge, and the ruins of his old pits were visible until the river road improvements were made. The first to start a business at that spot were Kirk and Burchet, and they did so in 1846, their occupation being that of tanners. In the great flood of 1849 they were swamped out, and when the waters receded everything in the tannery was smothered up with a thick coating of oozing mud. They were disheartened, and sold out to another of their trade named Smith, who had a leather shop in Elizabeth Street. His brother managed the tannery. He had as employees Richard Furneaux and James Oakley, whose sons, H. Furneaux and David Samuel Oakley, have, throughout life, been identified with Prahran and South Yarra. D. S. Oakley was born at Linstead Parva, Suffolk, in September, 1845, and his parents emigrated to Victoria in 1852, and settled in South Yarra, about the spot in Toorak Road where their son still remains. He has been active in minor doings that have contributed to the welfare of the city, such as serving on School Boards of Advice, and also prominent in social reforms, supporting all temperance movements, and he now occupies the Presidentship of the "Prahran Pioneers' Association." The Smiths were members of a Yorkshire family, and their father was a prominent Methodist Minister in England. The curious looking house standing to-day half-way up the hill was erected, it is believed, by the Smiths. In Kirk and Burchet's

time the difficulty was to find material with which to build a house. The house in question belongs to the era of imported houses, being made of teak, with an iron roof. In the fifties a great business was transacted in the importation of houses, for building material was very scarce. In 1852, Melbourne imported £370 worth of iron houses; in 1853, £101,380 worth; in 1851, wooden houses to the value of £921 were imported; in 1852, £28,777; in 1853, £246,371. Smith's old house has a forlorn appearance, with the rust of years on its roof, and its general weather-beaten look. When the trees and shrubs were in their pristine vigour, in 1857, the place, as it nestled on the hill side, had a pretty appearance. All that remains to-day of the plantations is a few struggling and dying pines, gaunt, and grotesque almost as trees drawn by Gustave Dore.

When the physical lay of Prahran, from East to West, is examined, it will be seen that the rush of waters from the high lands then found their natural levels on the way to the Yarra in the flats of Prahran. The floods at South Yarra are historical, and there is no doubt it must have been a damp stretch of country from Commercial Road to the Yarra. The late William Round records that in July of 1852 there was a running stream near the corner of Chapel Street and Commercial Road, only to be crossed by the residents clambering upon a post and rail fence that skirted Chapel Street. North-west of Commercial Road, along Chapel Street, was the well-known Barry's Paddock, a low and swampy place, where boys used to float and swim rafts, indulging in mock sea fights. For years after the settle-

ment had advanced, big gum trees remained in this swamp quite close to Chapel Street. Eventually the paddock was drained, and used as a sanitary tip, Elizabeth and Barry Streets now run through its original location. No wonder that Melbourne residents were wont to refer in pitying terms to the place as "Swampy Poor Ann," a play on the native name of "Purraran." The Government roads running east to west, viz., Dandenong Road, High Street, Commercial and Malvern Road, Toorak Road, together with the Government roads running north and south, Punt Road, Chapel Street, Williams Road, Orrong Road and Kooyong or Boundary Road, divided Prahran into sixteen blocks, which, in their turn, were sub-divided for the purposes of Crown land sales into sixty-four "sections," as they were officially described. The further sub-divisions of lands by private owners are responsible for the streets of Prahran much as they remain to-day. When the district was surveyed, and the thoroughfares mapped out, they were called roads. After the Crown land sales, when Road Boards were gazetted, the roads were named by the members of the Road Boards, though in some instances the word "road" has fallen into disuse, and the more homely term "street" used instead, such as Chapel Street and High Street.

The first sale of Crown lands in Prahran took place on June 10, 1840. The lands sold were those with frontages to the Yarra and to a Government road, afterwards Gardiner's Creek Road, now Toorak Road. Lot 1 started at Punt Road, and the lots numbered 18, the

last lot having frontages to Gardiner's Creek, Kooyong Road and the Yarra. The following is a detailed list of the lands, prices and purchasers:—

	a.	r.	p.		per acre
Lot 1	27	3	0	R. H. Browne	at £24/-/-
Lot 2	22	3	0	E. J. Brewster	at £30/-/-
Lot 3	20	0	0	G. R. Griffith	at £32/-/-
Lot 4	19	2	0	J. L. Deane	at £33/-/-
(South Yarra Railway Station stands on Lot 4.)					
Lot 5	19	0	0	J. W. Howey	at £27/-/-
Lot 6	17	3	0	Chas. Forrest	at £29/-/-
Lot 7	18	2	0	H. Dowling	at £27/-/-
Lot 8	20	0	0	A. Johnston	at £29/-/-
Lot 9	21	2	0	C. W. Roemer	at £26/-/-
Lot 10	21	2	0	C. Williams	at £33/-/-
Lot 11	20	2	0	A. Langhorne	at £40/-/-
Lot 12	34	0	0	A. Langhorne	at £32/-/-

These lots had a frontage of 650 feet to Gardiner's Creek Road, but they varied in depth, which followed the windings of the Yarra. For instance, Lot 12 had a depth on one corner to the Yarra of 3,175 feet, while on the opposite corner of the same allotment it had a depth of 4,830 feet.

The lots, when they crossed Williams Road, were larger. Lot 12 had its east frontage to Williams Road. Starting now at the corner of Williams Road and Toorak Road, on the east side, the following lots were also sold on the same day (June 10, 1840):—

Lot 13	60 acres	Jane Hill	at £7
Lot 14	63 „	John Brown	at £20
Lot 15	73 „	Charles Norris	at £20

			per acre.
Lot 16	70 acres	S. J. Browne	at £18
Lot 17	78 „	J. D. L. Campbell	at £20
Lot 18	60 „	W. H. Yaldwyn	at £16

The next sale of Crown lands, which now form a portion of Prahran, took place on June 27, 1849, just nine years afterwards, when ten blocks were sold. They ran in depths from Commercial Road to Toorak Road, and started at Kooyong Road, with Lot 27.

	a.	r.	p.			
Lot 27	54	0	38	J. Jackson	at	£5/5/-
Lot 28	54	3	15	J. Jackson	at	£3/-/-
Lot 29	53	3	7	James Rae	at	£1/10/-
Lot 30	55	3	19	W. and J. Payne	at	£1/14/-
Lot 31	53	1	12	T. Coleclough	at	£3/1/-
Lot 32	52	0	13	T. Coleclough	at	£3/7/-
Lot 33	52	3	13	R. A. Balbirnie	at	£2/12/-

(Hawksburn Railway Station stands on Lot 33.)

Lot 34	52	1	39	E. B. Hobson	at	£1/18/-
Lot 35	52	0	25	G. A. Robinson	at	£5/14/-
Lot 36	52	0	0	Peter Davis	at	£7/10/-

(The Prahran Market stands on Lot 36.)

The last sale of Crown lands in Prahran, as we know it to-day, as distinct from the Parish of Prahran, took place on Wednesday, May 15, 1850, by virtue of a proclamation issued on March 26, 1850. The following report of the sale appears in the *Argus* of May 16, 1850:—

“ Government Land Sale.”

“ The Government land sales, as advertised, took place in the rooms of Messrs. Tennent & Co., Elizabeth-street. at 11 o'clock yesterday. The attendance at the

sale was remarkably good, the greater part of our influential and moneyed citizens being present. The bidding was spirited in the extreme, most of the lots being sharply contested, and the prices realised cannot but be encouraging as a mark of the prosperity of the province. The number of lots advertised for sale was 122, but in consequence of the severe competition the auctioneer was only able to reach Lot 101. Below is appended a list of the different lots, and their purchasers, and it may be as well to remark that the purchases of Mr. Fawkner were made on behalf of the Co-operative Land Society."

Some of the land included in this sale were lots at St. Kilda, the upset price of which ran from 30/- to £2/10/- an acre. The upset price of the land sold in Prahran, announced in the *Government Gazette* of April 17, 1850, ranged from £1/10/- to £3 per acre. As the *Argus* reporter of the sale is not quite correct in all his prices as recorded for the lots sold, we will follow the original sale books, as before, now in possession of the Crown Lands Department. In this way we secure a record that is accurate in every detail. Indeed, these official records make sad havoc of some of the printed reminiscences of the early pioneers, and serve to show once more what a treacherous servant human memory is when recalling supposed facts and dates after the lapse of years.

With the exception of two blocks in South Yarra, the blocks sold in this sale of 1850 were bounded by Commercial Road, Punt Road, Wellington Street, Dande-

nong Road, and Kooyong Road. The first two are the South Yarra blocks.

	a.	r.	p.		per acre
Lot 37	51	3	8	Peter Davis	at £9/-/-
Lot 38	53	0	0	Peter Davis	at £12/15/-
Lot 39	35	0	39	W. Donald	at £15/10/-
Lot 40	34	1	30	W. Highett	at £9/5/-
Lot 41	34	2	12	H. Glass and T.	

B. Payne at £8/-/

(The Town Hall, Prahran, is erected on Lot 41.)

Lot 42	34	2	12	G. A. Robinson	at £8/10/-
Lot 43	34	2	12	W. & J. Payne	at £6/-/-
Lot 44	34	2	12	R. A. Balbirnie	at £4/15/-
Lot 45	33	3	26	G. A. Robinson	at £5/10/-
Lot 46	34	2	12	C. Williamson	at £9/-/-
Lot 47	36	0	0	R. W. Pohlman	at £7/10/-
Lot 48	34	2	12	J. P. Fawkner	at £5/-/-

(Toorak Railway Station is now on Lot 48.)

Lot 49	35	0	17	R. Sutherland	at £6/6/-
Lot 50	34	2	12	R. Sutherland	at £5/5/-
Lot 51	30	1	14	A. R. McDonald	at £5/5/-

(Armadaile Railway Station stands on Lot 51.)

Lot 52	30	0	4	J. P. Fawkner	at £4/12/-
Lot 53	30	2	10	Mary E. Chomley	at £4/-/-
Lot 54	30	0	4	R. W. Pohlman	at £4/17/-
Lot 55	30	0	4	J. H. Rose	at £4/10/-
Lot 56	30	0	4	H. Glass and T.	

B. Payne at £7/10/-

Lot 57a	15	0	27	T. Shiels	at £9/5/-
Lot 57b	15	0	27	E. B. Green	at £8/5/-
Lot 58a	15	0	2	E. Westby	at £10/10/-

	a.	r.	p.		per acre
Lot 58b	15	0	2	E. B. Green	at £12/5/-
Lot 59a	10	0	4	J. Brown	at £12/-/-
Lot 59b	10	0	0	S. Staughton	at £12/10/-
Lot 59c	10	0	0	S. Staughton	at £28/10/-

This 59c was the corner block, Wellington Street and Punt Road, which it was supposed would be a valuable business centre, hence the advanced price, as compared with the prices of the other lots.

	a.	r.	p.		per acre
Lot 60a	10	0	30	E. Dumaresq	at £10/-/-
Lot 60b	10	0	17	S. Staughton	at £13/-/-
(Windsor Railway Station now stands upon Lot 60b.)					
Lot 60c	10	0	17	H. Jennings	at £12/15/-
Lot 61	30	0	4	J. P. Fawkner	at £10/10/-
Lot 62	30	0	4	Peter Davis	at £7/12/6
Lot 63	30	0	4	G. A. Robinson	at £5/-/-
Lot 64	30	2	10	James Rae	at £4/10/-
Lot 65	30	0	4	B. Tindale	at £4/15/-
Lot 66	30	1	14	James Jackson	at £5/5/-

In round numbers, the price realised by the sale of the Crown lands now comprising the municipality of Prahran was £24,384.

Some of these early purchasers remained to leave their marks upon Prahran, others appear to have purchased the land from speculative motives. They passed out of memory after they had sub-divided and sold their lots. Now and again we come across a street bearing their names, but that is all. In almost every instance their holdings are covered with houses, and one may look in vain for any remains of the pristine



beauties of Prahran as they appeared to the eyes of the untutored aboriginals.

Blocks 11 and 12, purchased by Alfred Langhorne at the 1840 sale, still have at their foot touching the Yarra one of the traditional swamps of Prahran. Alfred Langhorne was one of the band of the bold overlanders who brought cattle to the province from Sydney, and the far distant stock stations in New South Wales. In July, 1837, it is recorded that Messrs. John and Joseph Hawdon drove cattle from their station at Howlong, on the Murray, to Melbourne. They took up a station at Dandenong, called "Bigning," meaning water holes, and that station adjoined one formed by this Alfred Langhorne, who was a partner with Captain Lonsdale. The Hawdons left their cattle in charge of Langhorne, with one Bourke as stockman. In 1838 Langhorne left for Sydney, overland, and on the journey met, at Broken River, the survivors of the party of men who had charge of William P. Faithfull's sheep. They had been ambushed, and eight out of the number of fifteen drivers were killed by the natives, and 130 sheep and cattle lost. Langhorne's interests in the Port Phillip settlement induced his return, and he was probably present personally at the Prahran land sale of 1840.

Another name written as an extensive purchaser on the original plan is that of George Augustus Robinson. On December 11, 1838, he was appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines, with four assistants. Mr. Robinson drew up a memorandum showing how Port Phillip was divided into protectorates for the natives. From this memorandum it appears that the Western

Port, or Melbourne District, was bounded on the South by the coast from Point Nepean eastward, on the North by the Australian Alps, on the West by the bay of Port Phillip; the eastern boundary was undefined. The head quarters were situated at Narre-Narre-Warren, about 20 miles from Melbourne. It was estimated that the district contained about 500 or 600 aborigines, men, women and children, and they were divided into three tribes, the Wawoorong, the Boonoorong, and the Watourong. The Wawoorong inhabited the district extending from the Yarra Yarra, taking in Prahran, as far as Westernport.

After the formation of a black police force, a section of the mounted aborigines was stationed at Narre-Narre-Warren, and it was the custom then to send up monthly supplies to the station from Melbourne. These supplies were conveyed in a dray by trusted aborigines. On one occasion, about the year 1846, a native police corporal named Gellibrand had charge of the dray. He was one of the black trackers employed in November, 1837, at the Cape Otway Ranges, to see if the fates of the unfortunate J. T. Gellibrand and Hesse could be traced, and from this employment he was known afterwards as Gellibrand. His native name was Beruke, meaning a kangaroo rat. The rat was his totem, and was so indicated by a kangaroo rat running over his mother at the time of his birth. The attractions of the settlement proved too much for Gellibrand, and he indulged so freely in rum that when the dray arrived at South Yarra he died as the results of his excess. He

was buried near the South Yarra Pound, then situated in the vicinity of where Clara-street is now.

An early, if not the very first, advertisement of poundings at South Yarra, in connection with the pound referred to, appears in the *Argus*, June 26, 1846, as follows:—

“At the South Yarra Pound, June 9, one brindle steer, white back, belly and tail, grey face, H.S. off shoulder, T. near rump; one grey or brown sided cow, white back, belly and tail, grey face, brown ears, slightly speckled about hip and legs, illegible brand near rump, like C. or G., reversed illegible near thigh, supposed KH or KM; if not claimed, to be sold July 3.”

The owner of the cow had no excuse if he failed to recognise the animal. Was ever animal so accurately described before or since? The “G” reversed may have been Gardiner’s brand, the K.H. may refer to Kent Hughes, who was an overlander and early squatter.

Robinson, who came from Tasmania, had a salary of £500 a year, out of which he had to provide horses, travelling equipment and attendants, and for which he had to control the Assistant Protectors, to travel from station to station, camp to camp, and also conduct the correspondence of the department. He built a house on the hill at the bottom of Chapel Street, that was afterwards sold for £2,500 to the well-known early squatter, who took up land in 1838 at Muddy Creek, Peter Snodgrass, and who, in 1856, was elected as one of the first councillors of Prahran. He was the father of the late Janet Lady Clarke. After his death his widow and daughters resided in Albert Street, Windsor. Robinson resigned his position in 1852, retiring on a pension of £220 to Bath, England, where he died at a house he had named “Prahran,” on October 18, 1866, aged 78.

## CHAPTER III.

SUBDIVISIONS OF CROWN SECTIONS—SOME HISTORICAL SALES—  
OWNERS AND PURCHASERS—WHAT NAMES SIGNIFY—A WON-  
DERFUL CONTRAST.

IN an account of a Crown lands sale, the "Argus" expresses its satisfaction that the majority of those present were local buyers, while the rapidly diminishing number of speculative purchasers who represented Sydney capital was a subject for rejoicing. Sydneysiders regarded Port Phillip lands as attractive bargains, and when purchased, as effective lures with which to tempt sub-divisional purchasers to pay handsome advances upon the Crown grant purchase money. The early men who were settlers, and not primarily speculators, were shrewd as well as brave men. The circumstance that they had pitched their tents at Port Phillip was proof, strong as holy writ, that they possessed grit and enterprise, and also money. It has been customary to praise the pioneers, to laud them for their "good works." The practice does not hurt anyone. The true position is, however, that the pioneers did not worry themselves about posterity. Their "good works" were for their own existing necessities. These men were at Port Phillip because they knew that fertile, well-grassed land meant fat stock, fine beef, and heavy fleeces of wool. They were there to make, if possible, their fortunes, whether by pastoral pursuits, trade or land dealing, was immaterial, so long as the harvest was gathered. The "grand

old pioneer " was just as human, and quite as selfish, as regards his own interests, as most mortals are to-day. They differed from us only so far as their open air life and trials by flood and fire made them self-reliant, and capable of enduring hardships that the somewhat artificial life of cities unfit us for. The camp fire blazes into life thoughts that the fire in the household grate never lights into being. While evidences in writing remain that the pioneers appreciated the beauties of virgin forests, park-like lands, and sweet grassed plains: records also exist that tell of hard fare, few comforts, and earth floors to wattle and dab huts. Such experiences, to be suffered, had to have a compensating balance in some direction, and that balance was found, in many cases, in land speculation. In a broad way Prahran lands resembled a Tom Tiddler's ground, to gain a footing upon which you certainly had to pay, but once upon it there was money to be made. The majority of the original purchasers of land in Prahran, it must be confessed, were speculators pure and simple. At least two of them were Sydney men, whose sole interest in the place was the belief that it was a safe channel for investment. Not one of these original Crown grantees shared in the early trials and troubles of the infant municipality. Nevertheless, the refreshing circumstance remains that there were sterling men amongst them, quite different in their ways of living to some of their neighbours, who were merely parasitic land jobbers and rapacious money lenders. Behind some of the latter men were syndicates, who bought the lands for rapid sub-division. Peter Davis, who pur-

chased the block bounded by Punt Road, Commercial Road, Chapel Street, and Gardiner's Creek Road, containing 156 acres, was the land buyer for a syndicate. Davis is said to have been a sailor in his early manhood. He had his race's instinct for accumulating money. When he set his seal on Prahran he had developed into a land speculator, an auctioneer, and a money lender. He had not received the title for the land bought on May 15, 1850, when he commenced to advertise allotments (June 3) for sale. His idea was to sub-divide a part of the blocks into ten small farms, with an area of from three to nine acres each. In his advertisement Davis asserts, it is "unquestionably the finest location in the vicinity of Melbourne for respectable suburban residences." It was only half a mile from the Botanic Gardens, and was in the neighbourhood of Colonel Anderson's, Major Davidson's, Mr. Ogilvy's and Mr. Bell's residences. The land was separated from the city boundary road by a Government road (Punt Road), and thereby exempt from the operations of the Building Act. Davis did not fail to point out to would-be purchasers that "the approach to Princes Bridge, on the south bank of the Yarra, is now in rapid course of completion, and will doubtless be quite finished in a few weeks' time. When that is done, all the above properties will possess an advantage of the greatest importance, having the first road, at all seasons, leading out of Melbourne."

The Major Davidson, mentioned by Davis, was a retired Indian officer, who had purchased blocks 1 and 2, from the original Crown grantees, Messrs. R. H.

Browne and E. J. Brewster, who bought the land at the June sale of 1840. The Major was all that the trappings of a retired Indian officer calls to mind in ceremonious service, curry, rice and salaams. He brought with him from India a number of native servants, who, when they went abroad with their flowing robes and swarthy faces, attracted attention. The Major was regarded as an authority on Indian affairs, for it was whispered:—

“Had he not the sacred Vedas?  
Had he not the Shastras too;  
Were they not unerring leaders,  
Telling all a man should do?”

His family intermarried with Lieutenant-Colonel Anderson's family. The Lieutenant-Colonel's father, the Colonel, was an ex-Imperial officer, and a fine old man, who was often in the sixties to be seen attending divine worship in Christ Church, South Yarra, and who, when dead, was accorded a most impressive military funeral. Major Davidson is recorded as having sold a paddock of 12 acres, in Dandenong Road, in 1854, for no less a sum than £17,000. The Ogilvy referred to was David Ogilvy (his name appears on the Law List of 1847 as a solicitor), who had a vineyard on Punt Hill, extending down to the Yarra. On the river slopes the morning sun ripened the grapes, which were very good, though the wine Ogilvy pressed and made from them was very indifferent. Portions of the old vineyard, well known as “Airlie Bank,” still remain as a part of a private garden abutting upon Alexandra Avenue. Ogilvy not only grew grapes and made wine, but he sold rooted vines and cuttings of choice sorts through the auctioneers, W. M. Tennent

and Co., who claimed that Ogilvy's red hermitage was "celebrated." We can truly say that the headaches the "hermitage" induced are not forgotten!

The last unsold portions of Davis's purchase were known as "Davis's green," and a large portion of it was swampy ground. It lay at the back of Osborne Street, L form in shape, the bottom point touched the Toorak Road behind Her Majesty's Hotel; the top point reached Punt Road. Great Davis Street, sweeping in crescent form into Fawkner Street, passes through the heart of it, its course being that of the bed of an old gully. The land is now all built over, but in 1876 the green was a favourite trial ground for the numerous cricket clubs of South Yarra. At the far end, opposite the South Yarra Post Office, at the south-west corner of Osborne Street, was a piece of land eight or ten feet below the roadway. Osborne Street, at the Toorak Road end, has all been reclaimed and built up. In its primitive state a gully ran from there to the swamp on the east of the railway line. One of the first doctors, Dr. Coates, had a house at the corner before the roads' levels were altered. When the level of Osborne Street was raised, passers by looked down on the dwelling, and into the yard attached thereto. A post and rail fence enclosed two sides of the hole. This somewhat rickety fence was the only protection from what was at night a constant danger to the footpath walker, inasmuch as he could, if not careful, easily make a swift and uncere-monious descent to the dweller below. Next to Dr. Coates, in Osborne Street, was a tent, in which dwelt E. L. Vail, who was destined to become a Mayor of



Prahran. Years afterwards he erected, on the site of his tent, a two-storied brick house—"Osborne Villa." It was demolished to make room for a coffee palace. The promoters of the latter put in the foundations of the building and then abandoned the project. Some villas now occupy the land, which was originally sold to Vail by one of the Payne brothers.

"He was probably neither a pretty nor an interesting boy, for as a man he was of the very plainest, with a short figure, always negligently "put on," a rough, mannerless way, and a voice husky and hoarse, although redeemed at times into an approach to commanding an audience, when he was strongly stirred by some exciting cause." The founder of Melbourne, John Pascoe Fawkner, is so described by one who knew him well, Westgarth, who once lived at South Yarra. Fawkner we know attended the land sale of 1850, when he purchased blocks 48 and 52. High Street runs through the blocks, and both have frontages to the Orrong Road. The Orrong Hotel is built on one corner, the Toorak Park and the Toorak Railway Station occupying the major portion of the block 48, which extends to Malvern Road. Fawkner bought this land for speculation purposes. It may be remembered that the "Argus" stated he was acting for a company. That may have been so, but the titles were issued in Fawkner's name. He exercised all the rights, and disposed of them as if he were the sole owner. Two months after the sale he sold a portion of 52 for £55/2/6, to a Mr. Moses Aaron Richardson. Fawkner paid £138 for the 30 acres. An interesting record of this transaction is in

the Council's possession—the original sale note, in Fawkner's hand-writing. It reads:—

“Melbourne, 23rd July, 1850.

“Mr. M. A. Richardson,—

“Bought of John Pascoe Fawkner, all that piece or parcel of land in No. 52 of the Government Section, Parish of Prahran, bounded on the north by the Government road nine chains, on the east by a private road seven chains seventy-four links, on the south by Ward's boundary line nine chains, on the west by a Government road seven chains seventy-four links, be the same more or less, being Lot 2, and half of No. 3 Lot, of Section Fifty-two.

“Received from Mr. Moses Aaron Richardson the sum of Fifty-five Pounds, Two Shillings and Sixpence, being the purchase money of the above land, and I agree to furnish the Deed of Conveyance of this land as soon as I receive the grant from Sydney, free of all further costs.

“JOHN P. FAWKNER.

“£55/2/6.”

The block to the north of Fawkner's was that of James Rae, and next to him, to the east, were two blocks belonging to his partner, James Jackson, whose record has already been lightly touched upon. The word “lightly” is, perhaps, appropriate, since Jackson, Rae and Co. were the first to start a factory in Melbourne for the making of soap and candles.

A place that is now a memory, is what was once known as “Balmerino's Home.” The only outward visible sign that it ever existed is the name of Balmerino Road, Toorak, running from Bruce Street to Winifred Crescent. “Balmerino's Home” is indicated on more than one old plan for the purpose of giving an idea of the situation of allotments; the outcome of sub-divisions after Crown land sales. Curious explanations have been current amongst “old residents,” not of Scotch extraction, as to the real significance of the word. Balmerino, pronounced Ba'mernie, was built and dwelt in by R. A.

McMurrone 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1850

Mr M. A. Richardson

Copy of Mr Pascoe Fox's letter

All that piece or parcel of land, in N<sup>o</sup> 32 of the second  
Section Parish of Prahran. Bounded on the North by the  
Gordon street Road Nine Chains, on East by a private  
Road Seven Chains twenty four links, on the South by  
Mered's boundary line Nine Chains, on West by a bounded  
Road Seven Chains twenty four links, be the same More  
or less being lot two, and half of No three of lot N<sup>o</sup> 32

Received of Mr Messrs Aaron Richardson the sum of  
Fifty Five Pounds Two Shillings and Sixpence  
being the purchase money of the above land and I agree  
to provide the deeds of conveyance of this land as soon as  
I receive the grant from Sydney - per of all further costs

Ans. 2.6

John P. Fox

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Balbirnie, and some supposed from that circumstance that the word was a verbal off-shoot of his name. The house was erected on Crown allotment 14, originally bought by John Brown, a wine and spirit merchant, and immediately afterwards sold to Balbirnie, who was a very early Melbourne settler with a well-filled purse. He speculated freely in Toorak land, and eventually realised a handsome fortune. These early men turned their hands to almost anything that promised to return money. Balbirnie owned and controlled a punt across the Yarra, at the bottom of Swanston Street. When the first bridge on piles was built at that spot, in 1845, at a cost of £400 (the present one cost £140,000), Balbirnie leased it from the Government for the sake of the heavy tolls—and he made them heavy—which the woodcutters and brickmakers of South Yarra, Prahran and St. Kilda had to pay before they could cross the ugly structure. The bridge, such as it was, however, served to develop the district south of the Yarra, and though the way through the bush, there being no roads, was often *via dolorosa*, a few widely scattered huts found their local habitation at St. Kilda and South Yarra. At that time the road to Liardet's Beach, now Port Melbourne, was the only attempt at road-making out of Melbourne.

R. A. Balbirnie, a tall, dour Scotchman, was a descendant of Arthur Elphinstone, the Scottish Lord Balmerino, the Jacobite, who favoured and fought for Charles Edward Stuart, "Bonnie Prince Charlie." His ancestor was in that historical line of Highlanders who broke through the British rank at Culloden Moor, at 11 o'clock on the fine morn of April 16, 1746. But

victory was not. The living wall of British soldiers, the Royalists, met the brave clansmen with a sheet of fire, and they were hurled back, a dead, dying and disorganised body of defeated men. Lord Balmerino, with the Earls of Kilmarnock, Lovat and Cromarty, were taken prisoners. Unlike Kilmarnock and Cromarty, he declined to admit, when tried at Westminster Hall for treason, that he had committed a crime, and he refused also to sue for mercy. He was the sixth, and proved to be the last, Lord Balmerino, for he was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1746, his bearing at the block being that of a gallant Scottish gentleman. As he walked from his prison to execution, seeing every window, and the tops of houses, even the masts of the shipping, covered with spectators, he cried out, "Look! Look! How they are piled up like rotten oranges!"

Balbirnie sounded the slogan of the clans which reverberated along the strings of time from the highlands of "Caledonia stern and wild" to the highlands of Prahran—Toorak—in the name of Balmerino. The bagpipes' music across the banks and braes, the crags and lochs, is not more sweet to the heart of a Scot, than the melodies of the harp of Erin floating through other halls than Tara's, and to another hill than that of Skreen, are to an Irishman. Balbirnie named his home, while his next-door neighbour, T. Coleclough, claiming, like Balbirnie, a line of "goodly descent and lineage fair," did likewise in the word "Tintern." Balmerino affixing its name and history to a street, shall Ireland lack a son—

"To seek a four-leaved shamrock  
In all the fairy dells?"

In other words, a fortune in Australia Felix, and when there do all that a Scot could do? St. Patrick and the Colcloughs forefend! So by the Saint's grace, Colclough and the Council, we have Tintern Avenue. The avenue is called after Tintern Monastery, in Wexford, the quaintest home in all auld Ireland, bestowed by Queen Elizabeth on one of Toorak Colclough's ancestors, Sir Anthony Colclough. It is said he was but the secretary of the lord who obtained the grant, and was sent by him to England to have the grant ratified. Colclough so pleased the Virgin Queen that when he returned he found that the deeds conferred the estate on himself—he evidently, too, like his descendant, had the “land hunger.” He died in 1584. Some years ago a great wake was held over one of the Colcloughs. At the wake, a local chronicler records, “The roast fowls had crape bows tied around their necks, and as the old butler served the whiskey the tears streamed down his face. The bottle he carried was decked with a crape bow, and as the whiskey “sobbed gurgling” forth, the butler said, ‘Ah, Sor, ’tis his bottle will miss him, indade, indade!’ and when the wake was over ‘there wasn’t wan of them knew whether he was going backwards or forwards, and most of them went sideways.’ ” Tintern Avenue itself is not too straight, for it is laid out in the shape of a horse-shoe, perhaps as a symbol of good luck to the Colcloughs who have gone, let us hope, this time, “upwards.” It was T. Colclough, purchaser of Lots 31 and 32, who built the original “Bush Inn,” on the corner of Lot 32, at Williams and Malvern Roads. Prior to that he

had kept the "Fountain Inn," at the Rocky Water Holes, so the hospitality, whether dispensed as Irish baronial host, or genial Australian boniface, necessitated in the Colcloughs having in the Abbey or bush shanty a little drop of whiskey. A Mrs. Stone was one of the first licensees of the hotel, and she is remembered in connection with her father, Samuel Benson. He was a Crimean veteran pensioner, and resided with her in his declining years. Many a time he entertained her customers as he "shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won," for he had seen service, as his records showed, at San Sebastian, Badajoz, Talavera, and Toulouse.

From Toorak to the Firth of Tay, where lies the village of Balmerino, or from Wexford, where stands monkish Tintern, is a long cry, but this record illustrates how our cities, in their names of streets and places, are inseparably bound up, warp and woof, memory, record and incident, in the common heritage of the glorious stock from which we spring.

Balbirnie also bought the block of land at the corner of High Street, running along Williams Road to Toorak Road, consisting of portions 33 and 44, containing 52 and 34 acres respectively. They were sub-divided and advertised for sale on Balbirnie's behalf by Peter Davis, in his capacity as auctioneer, on February 27, 1851. In the same advertisement, Balbirnie announced the sale of a small stud of ten horses. The animals were evidently of some local fame, since all their names are given, ranging from the classical to the domestic. "Hector" and his wife "Andromache" are mentioned;



also "Chloe" and "Toby," the latter a "boy could ride." Hay, harness and sundries are catalogued, too, for Balbirnie is, with his fortune, "homeward bound." After the passage of years he returned on a visit to the land which greeted him in early manhood with such prodigal generosity. While here he took yet another voyage, his last, to "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns."

Davis tells us in his advertisement that the land is separated from E. E. Williams's block by a Government road (Gardiner's Creek Road, to become Toorak Road), and that T. Colclough's was on one side and Mrs. Hobson's residence on the other. As to 44, it is bounded on the West by portions 43, T. B. Payne's property. This block is specially eulogised. Stress is laid on the fact that "This land is in the close neighbourhood of the Prahran Chapel." The land was two blocks, 2,600 feet away along High Street to the Government road that is afterwards to become Chapel Road, and then Chapel Street. Chapel Road was so called because of the first Independent Chapel having been erected in it in 1850. A plan exists in the Town Hall wherein Chapel Street is described as Fitzroy Street, and it so appears on some early titles. Sir Charles Fitzroy was Governor in New South Wales in 1846. He was an easy-going official, and troubled himself very little about the affairs in Port Phillip. The agitations and irritations of the people of Port Phillip upon the Separation question did not disturb his sleep, so there appears no reason why Prahran should have sought to honour him. However, the evidence is there, that a

half-hearted attempt was made to call the Government road Fitzroy Street. Whether it was because St. Kilda had a Fitzroy Street, or that native usage in the homely words of Chapel Road proved too strong for the name of aristocratic lineage, the truth remains that Fitzroy Street in that connection was, and is, a name on plans and titles that never had any vitality on the lips of men.

As a good auctioneer looking after his client, Mr. Balbirnie's interests, Peter Davis sets forth "that the rapid promise of improvement observed throughout the entire locality renders the sub-divisions of the property a safe investment. The property will be divided into portions suitable for orchards, vineyards, market gardens, etc.," and as a further attraction, a lunch, is announced at the sale. High Street was described as a Government road "leading to the back of Mrs. Chomley's." This Mrs. Chomley was the mother of Judge Chomley. Another of her sons was at one time the Superintendent of Police. The settlers had a grievance against one Chomley. They had, before the incorporation of a Council, subscribed a sum of money, which they had handed to Chomley, to improve the condition of High Street. In a petition to the Council, at about its third meeting, they alleged that Chomley retained this money, and would not devote it to road-making. The Council decided that it was not its business to interfere in a private arrangement as to road-making before the Council came into existence.

The "earth hunger," in 1851, found its surfeit in a land boom. Dozens of such sales as Balbirnie's were

taking place to seize the advantage of a market at flood tide. South Yarra and Prahran districts found their share of favour with buyers. South Yarra was particularly popular. Land changed ownership there rapidly, and each time with advancing profit. In an account of those wild, speculative times, we read:—

"A single acre of land at South Yarra was sold in the early part of 1851 for £30; it was re-sold in January, 1852, for £400, and was purchased a few months afterwards by the late Major Dodgson for £1,000, and subsequently disposed of by him at £2,500."

When we consider such results, we are not surprised that Balbirnie had a successful sale of his lands. Soon afterwards we find that Section 44 is further sub-divided, and intending purchasers are directed to "apply to Mr. Moyle, Ivy Cottage, Prahran; Mr. Seacombe Dawborn, Blue Bell Store, Chapel Road; or Mr. Clarke, gold broker, Great Collins Street; terms, one-fourth cash deposit; the remainder as may be agreed upon, in three, six, nine and twelve months, with ten per cent. added." Moyle was an organ builder, and a well-known early identity, who wore large round spectacles, that gave him an owl-like appearance. One would not suppose that he found any demand for his skill in organ building. The only pipes about in those times were the reeds of the swamps, which some pre-historic Pan may have "Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance," to awaken in harmonies the music of the spheres. "Ivy Cottage" was in High Street, at the corner of the avenue, but there was no ivy about it. It gave its name to the modest blind street almost opposite, and though the cottage has long since disappeared, Ivy Street remains. Clarke was probably the owner of the land,

for gold buyers were men of means. Their notices to successful diggers of the "come into my parlour" order, offering to buy their gold, filled columns in the newspapers of the early fifties. Clarke's connection with this land remains in permanent evidence in the name of Clarke Street. The Victoria Gardens, running through from High Street to Murray Street, occupy a portion of Balbirnie's original block 44. Balbirnie was the uncle of Jane Hill, who purchased Lot 13, 60 acres, stretching from Toorak Road to the Yarra. Miss Hill married John Glover, and they are both alive to-day (June, 1911), residing in a house built in 1850 at the foot of Williams Road, overlooking the Yarra. Last Good Friday completed the 72nd year in which Mrs. Glover had resided on the one spot. By reason of the full mulch of succulent sward on the hill the home's site was called "Mount Verdant." In the primeval days it must have been a lovely spot, with the surrounding wooded heights. There are evidences now, like the traces of departed beauty on a one-time handsome woman's face, that such was the case. Across Williams Road, at the base of the hills, is all that is left of the once well-known Lake Como; the Australian swamp with the Swiss god-mother. No longer does the sheet of water retain its early beauty, nor does it even possess its original size. It has shrunk into little more than a marsh, yet Mr. Glover remembers when its broad surface was wont to be almost black with fluttering water-fowl, and, naturally, being well stocked, it was as one of bountiful Nature's shops, a favourite resort of the aborigines. But *tempora mutantur*—the times

are changed! Fowls of the fen have flown, the waters have gone to the sea, and the aborigines have passed to their happy hunting grounds, leaving not a rack behind. In place of the piping of the quail, the lonesome cry of the sad curlew, and the mallard calling to his mate, we hear to-day the roar, the rattle, and the clatter, coming across the river, of the noisy battery machines pounding blue basalt into stones and dust to supply the road and footpath requirements of the municipalities of Melbourne.

Mrs. Glover is the daughter of the David Hill who bought the grazing rights over Prahran and Brighton from Captain Lonsdale's dummies, the Langhorne brothers. Hill was one of that intrepid company known as the "Overlanders," who one by one left Sydney on the long trail through the bush to Port Phillip Settlement. The first "Overlander" was John Gardiner, as we already know, and he made his journey in 1836; Hill was only three years after him, for he started with his wife and two infants in 1839. All his belongings, his household goods, were carried on two large drays drawn by bullocks, sixteen animals composing each team. The difficulties of the journey require to be realised. There's the expectancy, the worry, the excitement of the start! Then the slowly dragging onward move towards the South. Day after day passes, hot days, dusty days, wet days! The days multiply into weeks, while they in their turn glide into months. Four months! The eye tires of the monotonous gum trees so numberless, even as the scarcely indicated track seems endless. And all the way it is

crack! crack! crack! of the waggoners' whips. Angry, raucous voices shouting, "Gee up, Poley!" "Gee up, Darkie!!" mingle through the drivers' curses and swears, their by-oaths and by-blasts. Anything! so long as the setting sun, sinking red beyond a group of gums, fringing a full watered billabong, sees the settlers some miles from the spot wherefrom they started at sunrise. At times the drays are bogged in treacherous ground. The bullocks are coaxed, bullied, and whipped up to their yokes to exert their full straining strength. The drays creak and groan. Bolts are started, and the cry comes, "Stop!" so that rope may be found to bind and strengthen weak couplings. The heaving sides of the bullocks, their blowing nostrils, their slaverling foam-flecked mouths, and their angry snorts, bear evidence of their efforts and distress. Once more the command, "Gee up, Poley!" With rapid strides the driver passes along the line of the team, bringing the cutting lash of his long, powerful whip upon almost every hide of the sixteen bullocks, whose eyes show their whites, wild and wicked. At last a shout announces that the dray is released from the bog. Through all this strenuous effort a delicately nurtured woman is, with her two babes, sitting in the dray, symbolical of peace and fruitfulness, her heart strong and her spirit undaunted. Such was the every-day, work-a-day heroism of these early settlers and their brave wives, whose tribulations were as numerous as the hairs of their heads, but who, notwithstanding such journeys and such trials, lived through them to dwell and multiply in this land, even as Jacob of old and his

family, with his flocks and herds, settled and prospered in the land of Goshen.

This allotment of Mrs. Glover's is historical in the record of land sales in Victoria. A large portion of the land extending down to Bruce Street was purchased by C. H. James, the author of the great land boom of the eighties. He was, at the time, a minor speculator. He subdivided the land; it was rushed for villa homes, and this success led him on. His enthusiasm, or the devil that possessed him, as potent as the evil spirits that entered the Gadarene swine and destroyed them in the Galilee Sea, entered others as mad as himself, and hurled them also into the sea of bankruptcy and destruction. The banks even had to close their doors and put forth proposals for reconstruction. It was a most extraordinary time, entirely out of joint with prudence or common-sense. The germ of the madness was born in James, and the purchase by him of the upper portion of Mrs. Glover's Crown Block 13, started the boom. It sent James up like a rocket, to come down a blackened stick, to perish miserably in the end in a poverty-stricken garret in Sydney.

On April 16, 1851, W. M. Tennent and Co. advertise for sale “portions of Section 12, called by the proprietor ‘Como Estate,’ only 2½ miles from town, with the road in front of it (Toorak Road), in first rate order, and which has been all stumped.” The proprietor was John Brown, who purchased the property from F. G. Dalgety in 1840. Brown christened the estate “Como,” he himself being known as “Como Brown.” He was connected with Melbourne from its earliest days, for

he landed in 1838. His trade was that of a master builder. His first act on arrival in Hobart, where he had disembarked from the ship "Lavinia," from Liverpool, was to purchase three allotments of land in Melbourne, two situated in Collins Street and one in Elizabeth Street. He paid £40 for the land in Elizabeth Street, and when he crossed the strait to Melbourne, he was told that on landing on the banks of the Yarra to look up the street (Elizabeth) for the two largest gum trees that stood together, and the spot where they grew was his property. He went into partnership with a man named Stewart, and in 1854, when they dissolved partnership, they divided £300,000. Brown always took a keen interest in horticulture, a recreation he found ample scope for in the extensive and picturesque grounds of "Como." He was of Scotland, and was born in 1804, and died at "Como," South Yarra, in June, 1871. The estate has always been a well-known one, and the house built by Brown has been tenanted by squatting families, whose names in the Western district are as familiar as household words. Evidently the proposed sale was not a success, or private negotiations failed to discover any satisfactory offer. "Como" estate was one of the few Toorak estates that appears to have survived the tempting offers of purchase from the land boomers of the fifties and eighties. "Ichabod!" may now be written. To-day "Como" paddocks are sub-divided, so that streets may be made and villas erected. Most of these old land marks are passing away in accordance with that immutable law that governs terrestrial things, viz., that the whirligig



of time brings forth changes, and the places that knew us once shall know us no more.

Doctor Arthur O'Mullane, of 24 Queen Street, Melbourne (one of the first three-storied houses erected in Melbourne), purchased a portion of Section 41 from Hugh Glass and T. B. Payne. His purchase was described "as at Prahran, at the corner of the main Government road (Chapel Street) to Dandenong, and the River Yarra, known as O'Mullane's Paddock." It was sub-divided into 72 allotments, and submitted for sale by Francis and Cohen, auctioneers, Great Collins Street, on Monday, November 15, 1852. In the advertisement that firm states, "The land is the pick of the Prahran suburbans, and is immediately opposite the Prahran Church. Lots 1 and 2 have a frontage to Chapel Street of 78 feet, by a depth of 165 feet to a road 40 feet wide, known as Chatham and Greville Streets." "On Lot 1," says the advertisement, "a substantial foundation of a large house has been laid, which at the present rate of wages and material could not be done under an expenditure of at least £1,000." Lots 3 and 4 had frontages to Chapel Street of 39 feet, with depths of 99 feet. Lots 5 to 15 had frontages of 38 feet to Chatham Street, by depths of 78 feet. Lots 16 to 23 had frontages to Chatham and Greville Streets of 33 feet each, by depths of 78 feet; lots 24 to 33 had frontages to Chatham and Greville Streets of 33 feet each, by depths of 78 feet, with access to Izett Street. Lots 34 and 72 had frontages to Greville, Izett and Grattan Streets of 33 feet each, with depths varying from 100 to 105 feet to a right-of-way 10 feet wide.

O'Mullane's paddock originally consisted of 7 acres, and his property had four chains frontage to Chapel Street. At the time of his purchase from Payne, he arranged that they should jointly cut a road through the property, each contributing half; the result of that agreement was the formation of Greville Street. Payne desired, and attempted, to call the street "Marion," but O'Mullane, with his warm Hibernian blood, immediately thought of his distressed country, and those who had served dear Erin. Amongst the latter was Charles C. Fulke Greville, who some years before had written a work on the "Past and Present Policy of England towards Ireland." Greville's name was fresh in the memory of Irishmen at the time, and so O'Mullane brushed aside "Marion" in favour of "Greville." When O'Mullane had stamped Greville's name on the map of Prahran he followed with the name of one of the greatest of Irish patriots and orators — Henry Grattan — Grattan Street. Grattan, it may be remembered, described Flood, another patriot, as one standing "with a metaphor in his mouth and a bribe in his pocket." An attempt was made to call the street "Treloar," but Grattan's name, like the wrongs of his country, has survived. George Annand, owned a portion of the Commercial Road end of the block, and he agreed to give O'Mullane a road across his property, which road is the north end of Grattan-street. Cato Street was run through from Chatham Street to Commercial Road, and Izett Street formed. Izett, an early arrival, purchased his land from T. B. Payne, a piece in Commercial Road adjoin-

ing what is Izett Street, opposite the Prahran markets. He lived in his allotment for some time in a paling mia-mia, and afterwards erected the first two-storied building in Commercial Road. James Mason purchased Lots 1 and 2 from Dr. O'Mullane, which included the stone foundation of a house, on which the Royal George Hotel, opposite to the Town Hall, partially stands. Late into the seventies the block at the corner of Chapel and Chatham Streets remained vacant, with a post and rail fence fallen into decay, enclosing it. Right in the heart of Prahran, it was the last relic visible of the early days of land allotments in Chapel Street. How wonderful all this change! In the fifties a trunk of a gum tree stood in Chapel Road in front of the Royal George Hotel. In the fifties the wood-carts creaked in the roadway: to-day vehicles run over paved wooden blocks; in the fifties the brass tinkle of the cattle bell was heard in and about the tracks, to-day it is the warning clang of the tram gong? As Longfellow writes:—

"All things must change  
To something new, to something strange."

And we have only to go to High Street to find the lightning harnessed and doing the service of man—the electric tramway—along the route of what was once a cattle track! And it really all seems but yesterday. The very old men have passed away, but that is so with man; one generation grows while one decays, but the city is still ending, old places coming down, and still beginning, inasmuch as new edifices are going up. And so through time!

## CHAPTER IV.

THE MEN OF PRAHRAN—A NOTABLE MEETING—PRAHRAN ROAD DISTRICT—PRAHRAN MUNICIPALITY—PROGRESSIVES AND OBSTRUCTIONISTS—A STORMY MEETING—THE BATTLE OF PRAHRAN—POLICE TROOPERS PRESENT.

ANDREW FLETCHER, in a letter to a noble marquis (Montrose), said he knew a very wise man, who believed that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads he need not care who should make the nation's laws. Ballads have their uses, and so, too, have barristers, when they write ballads of the same value as one composed in 1856 by the man who afterwards became Judge Skinner. The ballad intituled "The Men of Prahran" essayed to tell something about Prahran in 1852-3, and it was sung on a memorable night in '56, in the Prahran Hotel, at one of the free and easy concerts held there. For a time the pub. was the pivot of the place. The building stood back from the street alignment. A portion of the original place and verandah may be seen in the photograph of the one-storied building subsequently erected on the corner, which had as a sign a painting of a marquee. The second story of the present Prahran Hotel was built on the first story of that building. The long, low verandah was painted green, and extended from the side to the front of the old building. On it, sitting on forms, when "smiling

toil retired,” were to be seen woodcarters, brickmakers, labourers, and others—

. . . “Talking, with looks profound,  
While news much older than their ale went round.”

One Murphy brewed the ale, which he called “Sheoak Ale.” The word has since passed into Australian slang, and enjoys classical distinction in the late Professor Morris’s dictionary, being generally understood by Australian beer drinkers to refer to beer of an inferior quality. It was the same Murphy, J. R., who bought extensively of the hill lands of South Yarra, and after whom Murphy Street is named. He was a bold land speculator purchasing land in almost every suburb. One of his first acts on reaching Melbourne in the early forties, was to buy some blocks of land in Bourke Street. After providing very liberally for his children (to escape probate duties) his will was sworn at £257,000.

On Saturday nights the rooms of the Prahran Hotel were bright with dozens of candles placed in tin sconces and candelabra. Christy Minstrels were engaged, who were assisted by amateurs taking at times “the floore.” Amidst all the jovial merriment, the songs, shouts, and laughter could be heard the constantly succeeding crash of the “cheese” amongst the skittles in the adjoining Bowling Alley! ’Twas in that environment that “The Men of Prahran” was first heard. The ballad so pleased a noted sly grog seller, who had his shebeen at Mount Erica, that he shouted the whole company a round of hot brandy and water, 1/- a nobbler, at a cost of £2/10/-. The ballad says there

were in '52-3 very few houses or women or men in Prahran, and that the place was regarded as a swamp:—

“ Then the building mania came,  
All were trying building lots to gain;  
Almost every house was then a store,  
Where they all sold sly grog galore.”

Poor enough verse, but still we are thankful! We can forgive the metre for the matter. We are further told that brickmaking was next the rage, and money flew about, but some of the bricks supplied gained a bad reputation. After a time of prosperity came a period of depression, in which mortgages had to be resorted to. Then “ a change comes o’er the scene, things were not what they had been. The diggers came back with their gold,” and on the top of that the municipality springs triumphant. Before the hamlet emerged, however, there was work done about which the balladist, with full poetical license, is silent. He does not tell us of a meeting held in April, 1854, in a little brick building, the Independent Chapel, that proved fruitful in results. That meeting of pioneers passed the following resolution:—

“ That in the opinion of this meeting the subject of drainage of the projected township of Prahran should be a general one, and that a subscription be forthwith commenced amongst the inhabitants and proprietors of houses and lands in order to have some claim upon the Government for their assistance, which is the opinion of Mr. Miller, the member for South Bourke, would be granted to the inhabitants if they evince a desire to start a fund for that purpose amongst themselves.”

The meeting subscribed £100 on the spot, and their earnestness is evident though their grammar may be weak. The committee appointed to canvass was:

Messrs. Miller, Langmuir, Crook, James, Hasledon, Creber, and Dr. Stokes. W. Miller was appointed treasurer, and P. Zohrab, secretary. Peter Zohrab, the Pioneer, was a man of parts, of 40 years, square shouldered, with black moustache, running into side whiskers, a large nose, and well set eyes, half-hidden with spectacles. He spoke quickly, his matter was good, his manner assertive. The committee had no sooner commenced work than the first of the afterwards recurring sporadic attempts of the early inhabitants of Windsor and South Yarra to quell the movement (and most Chapel Street movements, designed to advance the progress of Prahran proper) was made. The committee was on a winning issue, as the following proclamation, from the *Government Gazette*, May 19, 1854, shows:—

### PRAHRAN ROAD DISTRICT.

Proclaimed May 17, 1854.

The boundaries were set out as on the West the Richmond Punt Road, on the North the River Yarra, on the South the Main Dandenong Road, on the East the road running from the Main Dandenong Road East of Mrs. Chomley's to the River Yarra.

JOHN V. F. FOSTER,

By His Excellency's Command.

J. MOORE,

Assistant Colonial Secretary.

When this proclamation appeared, the committee held another meeting to formulate ways and means of

obtaining a board. The result of that meeting was a canvass of the district, and the outcome of the canvass was an advertisement in the *Government Gazette* of May 30, 1854, as follows:—

PRAHRAN ROAD DISTRICT.

May 23, 1854.

To Edward Bell, Esq., J.P.

Sir,

We, the undersigned landholders and householders in the Prahran Road District, request that you will cause a meeting of the landholders and householders in such Road District to form a District Road Board for the purpose of superintending, providing for, and completing the construction, repair, and maintenance of the roads in such Road District, and for carrying out therein the provisions in the Act contained."

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

JOHN MCCABE	GEO. FORREST
JOSEPH TAYLOR	JOHNSON WILSON
W. F. FORD	W. C. NEWTON
ALEX. MCCALLA	(ALL HOUSEHOLDERS)
R. B. CHOMLEY	CHAS. STERCH
PETER ZOHRAE	JOHN CAMERON
W. B. WHITE	JOHN GISBY
WM. ROBT. PYE	MATTHEW KEMP
THOS. SENIOR	PAT. KELLY
A. MANN	ADAM HOWIE

WM. ROBT. PYE,

Sec., *pro tem.*

In compliance with the above requisition, and under authority of the Act of Council, 16 Victoria, No. 40, Sec. 10, I hereby convene a meeting of the landholders and householders in the Prahran District, for the purpose named in the requisition, to be holden at the Balmoral Arms, Dandenong Road, on Saturday, the tenth day of June next, at seven o'clock p.m.

EDWARD BELL, J.P.

South Yarra,

May 24, 1854.



The meeting did not bear any fruits. The agitation for a Road Board lacked encouragement, owing to the sparse settlement; the authorities, too, favoured control by the Central Road Board, that control shortly afterwards coming to pass so far as Government roads were affected. In the meantime, Captain Clarke's "Municipalities' Act" was in the process of the drafting, to pass into the laws of the land in 1855. This Act was most beneficial in its results. It materially assisted the progress and development of the colony. Two provisions of the Act, viz., the restriction of the number of members of each Council to seven; and the return of each of those seven by the whole of the ratepayers, was held to have been more efficacious than anything else in rendering municipalities serviceable and popular. The Committee turned its eyes in the direction of Captain Clarke's Act, and therein saw relief. The members of the Committee were not long in seeking to have the district proclaimed a municipality. In that movement they were successful.

The seed of official existence from which Prahran sprouted into a municipal district was sown in the *Government Gazette* of April 24, 1855, which contains the following proclamation:—

"The Municipal District of Prahran, commencing at that point on the southern bank of the Yarra Yarra intersected by the eastern boundary line of the City of Melbourne, thence south by the eastern side of the Punt Road to Wellington Street, thence east by the northern sides of Wellington Street and the Great Dandenong Road to the S.E. angle of allotment 200,

thence north to the River Yarra Yarra, and thence by the southern bank of the River Yarra Yarra to the commencing point. And the said Municipal District shall be called 'Prahran.' "

This natal day of Prahran (April 24, 1855) saw in the same *Government Gazette* a proclamation also regarding its metropolitan neighbours. Whatever has been their heritage of success or failure, or whatsoever may be their fortunes lying in the womb of time, they were born under the same star and at the same time. The storms of discord, however, made their appearance early around the cradle of Prahran, whereas other municipalities simply went forward to the incorporation of their Councils, Prahran struggled through the painful throes of a protracted fight amongst its townspeople. At first Prahran did not, like a dilatory truant creeping unwillingly to school, lag long behind its active and enterprising neighbours. In the abstract, most of the Prahran residents after the proclamation of the municipal district were in favour of electing a corporate body, such as a Council, to administer to the growing requirements of the place. As a result, however, of desultory commune amongst themselves, two bodies of public opinion were gradually evolved, which questioned, with conflicting views, the wisdom or otherwise of taking steps to incorporate a Council. Those against the proposal—the Obstructionists—drew doleful pictures of the poor man crushed by the weight of rates, that would render his day's labour, early and late, a bitterness unto him, since the municipal Caesar, in the person of the rate collector, would demand the town's

tithes, and, growing more pessimistic, the Obstructionists gave further expression to the perils threatened them by the portentous arm of authority, with its Gargantuan grasp, looming through the proclamation. Prahran, they predicted, would soon be a deserted village. Half the inhabitants had already left for the gold diggings, while those that remained only saw desolation ahead, and the return of the times when the heron and the hollow sounding bittern must once more come into their own, and remain undisturbed in the solitudes of sedge choked swamps. The lean years were upon them. The colony was suffering from having been o'er drunk with gold. The romantic, wonderful Midas-like times had passed. The outlook was grey and drear. Prahran seemed, to these residents, less able than its neighbours to bear taxation. Their tale of troubles was full, the swamps were Sloughs of Despond. They were pilgrims without progress. They groaned and growled. More especially so was that the case when winters' rains flooded the water-ways, causing the swamps to overflow their reed-fringed edges, and inundate the land bordering them. Hurrying waters ran riots about the settlers' holdings wheresoever the land levels allowed the floods to do so. But such assaults of Nature caused no craven feelings to arise in the breasts of the Progressives, who were out to play the parts of men. A virility of purpose animated them with the stimulating desire to clutch circumstance by the throat, and conquer the natural difficulties of swamp of low land, bog and water, and so fashion the inhospitable parts of Nature to their will, that they might

build homes that would be sweet to live in, and win, as a meed of their toil, from the wild bush, brake and bracken, gardens fair to see.

Considerable feeling commenced to be displayed between the settlers, who ranged themselves upon the different sides. Some of them did not hesitate to abuse each other in ill-mannered terms. At that time ill-feelings were born which afterwards developed into bitter and virulent feuds. These were so threatening that the authorities deemed it necessary to keep the more violent in check by the precautionary display of mounted troopers, as we shall see further, when the proposals were publicly discussed under the official imprint of authority. This internecine strife, flaming and smouldering by turns, was only capable of a peaceful solution by constitutional methods. In the end the two factions were forced by the march of events to measure their respective voting strength. In the act of doing so a definite issue was presented. The first step was taken by those in favour of the incorporation of a Council including its corollary of self-government. A Committee was formed, of which David G. Stobie, who lived at Cliff Street, was the honorary secretary. He canvassed the settlers, and endeavoured to show them the advantages that would ensue from having a local administration to deal with the district's wants. He was at the time well satisfied with the results of his labour. The Opposition party during the canvass adopted a *laissez faire* policy. Stobie was thereby lulled into a false sense of security, from which, when the awakening came, he commented bitterly upon the fickle promises

of men. In, however, their "masterly inactivity," the opposing party over-reached themselves. By their neglect they allowed Stobie to steal a march upon them. He obtained the ear of authority, and so succeeded in having notified in the *Government Gazette* of May 16, 1855, the following notice, to fall like a bomb among the ranks of the Obstructionists:—

"Claud Farie, Esq., to be the Chairman at the meeting of the resident householders and land-owners within the Municipal District of Prahran, appointed to be held on Monday, May 21, in the Church of England School, Chapel Street, Prahran, and at all adjournments thereof, pursuant to the Act of Council, 18 Victoria, No. 15, Sec. 11."

The Obstructionists, led by John Goodman, a resident of Toorak, and an M.L.C., rose as one man from their lethargy. The canvassing on both sides was thorough as well as acrimonious. Disquieting rumours reached the authorities, who appear to have become "jumpy" concerning what the wild settlers out at Prahran might do one to the other, or perhaps they may have had misgivings as to the safety of Claud Farie, who, as chairman, was to strive to curb the terrible throes of this municipal and anti-municipal madness. The authorities were not justified in their extraordinary behaviour, for we read in the *Melbourne Morning Herald* that "After the meeting the residents separated peaceably enough, though it would seem that the authorities anticipated a row, as some eight or ten mounted troopers, sabred and pistoled, were discovered to be drawn up at the entrance of the building as the vast crowd emerged peaceably and quietly." The *Argus*, referring to the same incident, contents itself with the

laconic observation, "Eight mounted troopers were stationed outside the building."

This meeting, the first public meeting held in Prahran, was a notable one in several ways. There was a willingness about it and a desire to make things "hum," which in subsequent years found their prototypes in many a hard contested municipal and political fight. It was set out "that the meeting was held for the purpose of taking the first steps toward establishing a Municipal Corporation at Prahran under the recent Act of Council." The objects for which the meeting was called, were:—

1. To decide whether the Council for the district should consist of three, five or seven members.
2. To decide whether the members of such Municipal Council shall or shall not receive any pecuniary remuneration, and, if any, what shall be the amount thereof?
3. To elect the members of such Municipal Council.

It was estimated there were 500 persons present, which is the "vast crowd" alluded to by the *Melbourne Morning Herald*. The Sheriff, Claud Farie, was in the chair. He was flanked by Mr. Wright, Chief Commissioner of Goldfields, the Colonial Engineer, Captain Charles Pasley, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Mollison and Mr. Goodman, M.'sL.C.

In his opening remarks the chairman alluded to the fact that the Obstructionists had been caught napping by Stobie in the following words:—

“He understood that since the first petition to the Legislative Council in favour of Municipal Institutions, a majority of the inhabitants of the district had petitioned against it, but that the petition was too late to be of any effect. He would state, however, that if the opinions of a very large majority of the meeting he saw before him were adverse to that meeting, and to their proceeding to constitute themselves formally, he should feel himself justified in leaving the chair upon the expression of the sense of that majority.”

These remarks were received with “cheers and confusion,” and Goodman, while not crying, “Most Learned Sheriff,” was quick to take advantage of the opening to render the meeting abortive. He laid stress on the opinion of the chairman, and argued that the only question before them was as to whether the meeting should be proceeded with or be lapsed. Peter Snodgrass rose, to the accompaniment of cheers, hisses, hoots, bell ringing and divers noises. The *Herald* says it was almost impossible to report the speakers, so loud were the disturbances. Snodgrass was up upon a constitutional point, but the audience would not listen to him. He managed to say he objected to any adjournment, and referred to Clause 12 of the Act. Then came the great wave of sound that smothered his voice. Only the hoarse reiterated cries of “Adjourn,” “Adjourn,” could be heard above the pandemonium that ensued. In vain, at first, did the chairman attempt to restore order. Both factions were in full tongue, and, like hounds in sight of game, they were not to be denied. At last some semblance of order was restored, and

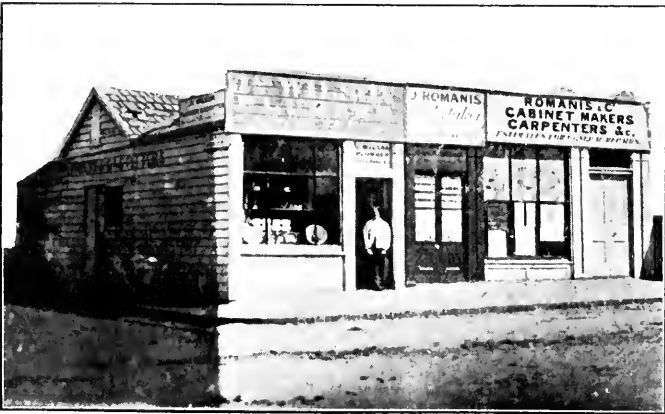
Goodman continued. It had been stated that a majority of the householders of Prahran had signed the petition sent to the Lieutenant-Governor in favour of these institutions. He was not there to question the genuineness of those signatures, but he would only state that while there were 690 signatures in favour of these institutions, there were 760 against. Had the petition been presented in time to the Lieutenant-Governor to stay the proceedings, he would have done so. Had the Lieutenant-Governor not been satisfied at first by representations made to him he would have called upon the citizens of Prahran to present other petitions, and have formed his own conclusions therefrom. He (Goodman) was quite sure that even those who were in favour of municipal institutions did not wish to see them carried against the feelings of the majority, for their object in seeking these institutions was for the benefit of the district, and they would give way if they saw an unequivocal objection raised. To those who supported these institutions, he would point out the fact that there were 1,014 houses in Prahran inhabited, and 1,740 uninhabited. As no rates could be levied on the latter, the goods and chattels of the inhabited houses must be subject to increased charge. Those who owned houses were most of them absent, and the rest, in fact, would have to pay for the absent."

Goodman, who said much more to the same effect, was alternately greeted with cheers and hoots, the opposing parties joining in yelling down each other in great barbaric diapasons, that the chairman in vain





GRAHAM BERRY'S GROCERY STORE  
*Corner of Chapel Street and Gardiner's Creek Road*



BUILDINGS OF THE PAST  
*Shops in Gardiner's Creek Road*



tried to silence. Goodman ended his appeal to the residents with the motion—

“That the chairman leave the chair, and ask leave to sit that day nine months.”

The reading of the motion was followed by more stormy outbursts. After an interval the chairman managed to ensure sufficient silence to allow George Hull to second the motion. Immediately he did so, a man, described in the *Argus* report as a person named “King,” rose to address the meeting, but he was received with groans and hisses. He was eventually compelled to sit down. Stobie, as a counter to Goodman, moved:—

“That this meeting proceed to the business for which it was convened, according to the terms of the Act.”

Stobie’s blood was up; not without reason had his parents named him David. He was opposed by Goodman, M.L.C., and Goodman was the Goliath standing in the way of progress and prosperity. In caustic tones Stobie said: “It was strange that Goodman, who formerly showed no interest in the matter, should now suddenly put himself forward to oppose the measure. It was high time for incorporation, for there were many local grievances and nuisances which called loudly to every rational man to take advantage of the Bill to carry it into formation. (Cries of “No,” “No,” and hisses.) Let them consider the unhealthy state of Prahran. It was better to spend the money in the removal of nuisances than spend it in the cure of diseases caused by them.”

“Hisses” were Mr. Stobie’s portion for uttering that palpable truth. Snodgrass had in the meantime been

full of sullen wrath, and, like Achilles of old, felt very much like retiring to his tent, leaving Prahran as Mycenae was left, to fight its own battles. He had felt his rebuff at the hands of the chairman of the meeting; in his heart the anger burned that was destined to cause the chairman trouble. At this stage he contented himself with seconding Stobie's amendment.

Captain Pasley tried, as one speaking with the authority of official status behind him, to pour oil on the troubled waters, but the meeting was out of hand. He was met with a fire of hisses, groans, hoots and other less "complimentary remarks." He managed to refer to the streets as being impassable on dark nights, and told the residents that if they did not help themselves they could not expect the authorities to do so.

Peter Snodgrass reiterated his objections, stating it was not legal to adjourn for nine months, and, further, that the chairman had no business there until an assessor had been elected. He would move as a further amendment—

"That the meeting elect two assessors under the 12th Clause of the Act."

A Mr. Hammill supported the motion for adjournment, but not for the same reasons as Mr. Goodman. He propounded the remarkable question to the meeting as to how many of them had left the mother country because of the obnoxious system of taxation practised by its municipal bodies. The query was greeted with "great cheering." Thus encouraged, the speaker soared away on the wings of eloquence with the assertion that they would "induct such a system there, and during the present condition of the colony.

If they thought it expedient to tax themselves, let them vote for this Bill; not if they were of the opinion that it was not expedient to tax people whose means were swamped in the purchase of a miserable allotment."

After Dr. McNicholl had supported the motion for the adjournment, and regretted the intemperate spirit that had been manifested, the chairman intimated that he would not leave the chair unless a very large majority declared for that action. At this moment the unexpected happened. What was already a memorable and historical meeting was rendered still more remarkable by the accidents which punctuated its progress. "A working man, whose name we could not learn," says the *Argus* report, "was proceeding to address the people, when one of the benches, on which about 20 people were standing, gave way with a loud crash, throwing those upon it on the ground. At the same time, some person who had climbed over the door slipped and broke some squares of glass. A great deal of confusion was caused by the incident. Order having been restored, the speaker said that what they had to consider was not the health of the place, but the poverty of the place. The chairman urged discussion, as he considered the question a very grave one, whereupon Graham Berry, a grocer, said that if the question was adjourned for nine months it would be adjourned for ever. It was an error to imagine that they could avoid taxation in that way, for whether they taxed themselves or not, they would still be taxed in some way. His remarks were received with groans and uproar. The chairman made an effort to quell the noise. He stormed

and threatened to call upon the meeting to support him against the interruptions of a person named 'King,' who had been foremost in every noise during the evening." Presumably the chairman's appeal had a palliative effect upon "King," for the meeting quietened down enough to hear one Stephenson move an amendment that "Three months be substituted instead of nine." A Mr. Campbell supported a short adjournment, but he would not second the amendment, which a Mr. Beauchamp agreed to do. At this stage a Mr. Crook caused roars of laughter by addressing the meeting in his opening words with the lines—

"It gives me much delight  
To meet you here to-night."

And then he went on to oppose any adjournment. He charged the gentlemen (the Goodman faction) who came forward to support it with being those who would be most interested in avoiding such a measure, as they would have to pay the greater share of the taxation. The chairman put the motion for the adjournment for nine months, which was carried by an overwhelming majority. He then left the chair amidst reiterated cheers. Thus ended the first round in the local warfare in what was known afterwards as the "Battle of Prahran." The Obstructionists had won. The Goodman followers were delighted at their success, while the feeling was very keen on the other side that the chairman had not given the Progressives a fair deal. It was asserted, too, that a large number who had pledged their votes to the Progressives had gone over at the last moment to the mammon of unrighteousness. Has it not been ever thus? The meeting was destined

to have its aftermath, for amongst the most indignant of the Progressives was Peter Snodgrass, who declared that he spoke by card and act, and that the chairman's (Claud Farie) ruling was unsound, and that he, Peter, would make him pay for his blunders.

## CHAPTER V.

PETER SNODGRASS SUMMONS CLAUD FARIE, THE SHERIFF—THE  
FACTIONS' BITTERNESS GROWS—THE HON. CHARLES PASLEY—  
JOHN GOODMAN'S OPPOSITION—THE BATTLE STILL RAGES.

PETER SNODGRASS did not allow his wrath to grow cool by waiting. The more he reflected upon the conduct of chairman Claud Farie, the more certain was he that Farie had acted *ultra vires* in ignoring the proposal to appoint an assessor or assessors. The defeated party—the Progressives—was very sore at the way events had turned out. They had no love for the chairman, but they loved the representative of the "Toorak gentry," John Goodman, M.L.C., still less. Snodgrass, as we know, had squatting interests at Muddy Creek, and he held land in Prahran. He expressly stated at the meeting that the Municipal Bill was not in favour with him as a landholder, but as he felt that it was the wish of the majority to form a Council, he went all the way with the Progressives. The step carried him further than he anticipated. He had suffered defeat at the hands of the party led by Goodman. Farie had been, in Snodgrass's opinion, tinged with the bias of his class and position. He had strained points in favour of Goodman as against the general weal of the residents and the growing district. The day following the meeting, Snodgrass launched a legal bolt against Farie in the shape of a summons. The meeting took place on Monday, May 21; and Wednesday, May 23,



Claud Farie, Sheriff, appeared on the Civil side of the Police Court, before Justices Noel, Hull, Martin, Mollison, M.L.C., and Colonel Anderson, M.L.C., to answer the following charge:—

For that on May 21, Claud Farie, Esq., having been duly appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria to preside as chairman at a public meeting of the residing householders and landholders within the limits of the Municipal Council or District of Prahran, duly convened by ten or more persons who had signed the petition for the construction of such Municipal Council or District, and notification of such appointment having been duly inserted in the *Government Gazette*, did refuse and neglect to preside properly at such meeting, contrary to the Act of Council (18 Vic., No. 157), in that case made and provided, whereby the said Claud Farie hath forfeited a sum not exceeding £50.

Snodgrass was not represented by counsel, but Farie retained a solicitor for his defence, named Smith.

In launching his complaint, Snodgrass alleged that defendant Farie had not carried out the provisions of the 11th and 12th Clauses of the Act. The only adjournment allowed by the Act was an adjournment for polling purposes. Goodman, who appeared as a witness on behalf of Farie, stated that the defendant had agreed to adjourn the meeting if he (Goodman) had a majority in his favour. The motion he lodged, that the meeting be adjourned for nine months, was carried by 900 aye votes to 100 negatives. The motion of Mr. Snodgrass was not seconded, and therefore was not put to the meeting by the chair. Smith, for the defence, contended that the Legislature contemplated such a contingency as had arisen by using the words, "all adjournments" in the Act. Snodgrass, in reply, said that the chairman was only there as a returning officer. His duty was to supervise the election of

assessors. The words "all adjournments" referred to an adjournment such as might be necessary in case of riot. The meeting had no opportunity of appointing assessors, for the motion was not put by defendant. That was the special act of which he (Snodgrass) complained. Justice Noel, the chairman, said that the members of the Bench were divided in opinion, but the majority was in favour of defendant. The question would be referred to the Attorney-General, and the Bench would give its decision that day week.

One of the justices who adjudicated was Hull, the George Hull who seconded Goodman's motion for adjournment. It may be noticed, too, that Goodman swears that there were 900 aye votes to 100 negatives, thus placing the numbers of the first meeting in Prahran at 1,000. The newspapers' estimate was 500, exactly half Goodman's tally.

The Court was crowded with the residents of Prahran, and the two factions grew warmer as their passions were fanned by expectations. They had, however, to exercise a week's patience. In the meantime their attention was diverted by a letter of David G. Stobie, in the *Argus* of May 25, wherein he signs himself as the "late Hon. Secretary of the Prahran Municipal Committee." He was afterwards secretary for many years of the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum. He came to the colony under engagement as a clerk to a bank, and took up his residence in Prahran, but subsequently removed to Boroondara. Plainly, at this stage, Stobie seemed to regard his occupation, like that of Othello's, gone. And, like the Moor of Venice, he was deceived.

He does not conceal his chagrin at the instability of human votes, and the insecurity of human promises. He writes fully on that aspect of the defeat of the Progressives, but more in sorrow than in anger. And then he incidentally lets us have a thumb-nail sketch of the reigning condition of things on May 25, 1855. "No doubt," writes Stobie, "the times are altered when bricks realised fabulous prices, and when brick-making was one of the most lucrative of trades. Prahran was then in its zenith, for its sole staple was bricks, and it enjoyed a full share of the patronage which was then going. Another nine months with impassable and dangerous roads, and without lighting, drainage or sewerage! Another nine months of nuisances, and the total absence of any sanitary measures for the preservation of public health! Could any step be more suicidal as regards the prosperity of Prahran? I would be extremely glad to learn that the Government, to avert the serious consequences of the adjournment, had decided to place the township under the supervision of a Board of Commissioners in lieu of a Municipal Council."

Stobie thus records the era of brick-making in Prahran, but Prahran also relied on market garden produce, and upon firewood. Before the Crown lands sales, portions of the lands were let out on what were termed "cultivation leases." Land was also leased for brick-making purposes. As far back as September, 1838, a tax was levied on brick-makers, by which they had to pay £10 per year for being on Government land, and £5 for erecting a hut, and £2/10/- for the use of

the clay. The "zenith" Stobie refers to was in 1854, when the products of Prahran found an unlimited and highly profitable market in Melbourne. Prahran carrots brought 1/- per bunch; cabbages, 5/- each (in July, same year, 1/6); peas, 2/- a quart; oats, 11/6 per bushel; turkeys, £1 to £2 a piece; geese, £1 to £1/5/-; fowls, per couple, 14/- to £1; eggs, 6/- and 10/- per doz. Bricks were £20 a thousand. Bricklayers by piecework received £11 per square of one brick thick for work only; labourers, for earth work, from 3/- to 5/- per cubic yard. Melbourne was burning at the rate of 20,000 tons of firewood per annum, and a large load cost £4 or £5.

On the day that David G. Stobie's Jeremiah-like lamentations were published in the *Argus*, another letter also appeared, regretting the nine months' postponement, and pointing out the great distress existing in Prahran. "Roads were wanted, light, hospital, and a cemetery. It would have been a Council's duty to look after the sick and the dead; now all had foolishly been let go by the board." This writer, "Resident," then proposed that "steps should be taken to form an indigent Gentlewomen's Relief Association, the same as had sway in Scotland. If Lady Hotham and other influential ladies were approached, something might be done."

Whether anything was done then or not is unrecorded, but that letter was the first public indication of a contemplated "Ladies' Benevolent Society" in Prahran. In the meantime, while the settlers were discussing Stobie's letter, and that of "Resident," the

week passed, but the Bench manifested no sign that it intended to deliver any judgment in the famous case of Snodgrass *v.* Farie. The residents grew impatient, and rumours circulated that the case had been settled out of Court. The Attorney-General, it was said, had pointed out to the parties the undignified spectacle afforded to gods and men, by such members of the "gentry" as Messrs. Farie and Snodgrass entering the lists to fight to an issue in a common Police Court. A move was made by Prahran residents to find out something, but the official reserve was as difficult to overcome as the local swamps were to drain. Then the press was appealed to. Members of the Fourth Estate endeavoured to probe the Snodgrass-Farie official reticence through its cloak of inky darkness, but they met with no success. Finally, on June 4, the *Melbourne Morning Herald* writes: "Numerous enquiries have been made of us relative to the decision of the magistrates upon the complaint preferred by Peter Snodgrass, Esq., M.L.C., against Claud Farie, Esq., M.L.C., for breach of the Municipal Act, at a rather boisterous meeting held at Prahran, which must be fresh in the recollections of our readers. All that we know upon the subject is that the magistrates before whom the complaint was preferred, postponed their decision for a week in order to obtain the opinion of the Attorney-General upon the knotty point. A considerable number of persons interested in the decision attended the Court upon the day to which the decision was postponed, but neither the plaintiff nor defendant

were there, and no decision was delivered, nor has any allusion been made to the matter since."

Seven months afterwards, or as the time approached for the adjourned meeting to be held, it was rumoured that the Sheriff, Claud Farie, who resided in South Yarra, desired no more official acquaintance with the untutored Prahran residents, who had proved themselves rude of speech and noisy in meeting. The rumour was confirmed when this notification appeared in the *Government Gazette* of February 14, 1856:—

"The Hon. Charles Pasley to be Chairman of the Prahran Municipal District, vice C. Farie, Esq., resigned."

The Hon. Charles Pasley arrived in Melbourne in September 18, 1853, under engagement to the Government, as Colonial Engineer. He was a captain at the time of his appointment in the R.E. Subsequently he was made Chairman of Road Boards. He held the office of Commissioner of Public Works in the Haines Ministry from November 28, 1855, to March 11, 1857. Pasley volunteered for service during the Ballarat riots and the Eureka Stockade (1854), and for the New Zealand War, where he was severely wounded in the thigh. He lived to be Agent-General for Victoria in 1864, and died at Chiswick, November 11, 1890.

The Progressive men of Prahran had watched with impatience the passage of months, during which time they had to suffer all the inconveniences of bad roads and insanitary nuisances. A report in the *Argus*, February 2, 1856, shows that they were early afield in their determination to have a Town Council incorporated. A meeting had been held on the Wednesday before that date, at the Mechanics' Institute, Chapel

Street, to take into consideration the advisability of memorialising His Excellency the Acting Governor to proclaim the township a municipality. Mr. John Craven, who afterwards was the first Town Clerk, was in the chair. A motion was moved by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. James Mason, affirming the opinion that the Prahran Council should be elected "as soon as possible." Mr. Wage moved an amendment, which was seconded by Mr. Duke—

"That we are not at present in a position, from the present state of trade generally, to elect a new municipality."

The amendment was put and lost. The original motion was carried with only five dissentients. The meeting was then adjourned till the following Monday, at 7.30, to the Bowling Alley, which has already been mentioned. It was two doors from Commercial Road, on the south-west side of Chapel Street, and was known as the "American Bowling Alley and Saloon." The saloon was a favourite resort of the young bucks of the time; was frequently used for public meetings, and the fact that there "was a pub next door" did not detract from its popularity.

The meeting of Prahran's Progressive Party alarmed the residents at the south end of Chapel Street. On February 8 a meeting of the inhabitants of Windsor was held in the Assembly Rooms connected with the Windsor Hotel. A Mr. Campbell occupied the chair. The first speaker was Mr. Hood, who claimed the right to speak, as he was a large mortgagee of properties in Prahran. He was opposed to the establishment of a municipality, and urged those present to prepare a memorial for presentation to the Acting-Governor,

praying that Windsor might be joined to St. Kilda; or as a separate ward of the City of Melbourne. Mr. Errol said he, too, was in favour of cohesion with St. Kilda. "It would not be wise for them to have anything to do with the swamp down below. Prahran was fit for nothing but kitchen gardens. They in Windsor had good roads." A Mr. Willoughby arose, and told the scoffing residents of Windsor, notwithstanding their gibes, that he "did not approve of stigmatising Prahran as a swamp." Like the "brave Lord Willoughby" of English ballad fame—

"With courage fierce and fell  
He would not give one inch away  
For all the devils in hell."

They might sneer, but "coming to the meeting he had fallen into the gully at the end of the street. There was more room for improvements in Windsor than in Prahran." The gully into which Willoughby stumbled was in the vicinity of Punt Road, and was afterwards, owing to its dangerous condition, the subject of frequent correspondence between the Prahran Council and the Central Road Board. J. B. Crews also spoke, saying that Prahran could be easily drained, and to do so would not require a much larger outlay than Windsor. A motion was then carried—

"That a Committee be appointed to watch over the proceedings (at Prahran), and be prepared to nominate candidates for the representative of Windsor, in the event of the people of Prahran deciding on a municipality, and that the Committee consist of Messrs. Crouch, Campbell, Errol, Court, Wade, Martin, and Wilson."

The meeting of the Prahran residents, which had been adjourned from the previous Wednesday, resumed its being on Monday, February 5, 1856, in



the Mechanics' Institute, Chapel Street, for the "further discussion of the question." About 250 persons were present, amongst whom were the Chief Commissioner of Public Works, Captain Pasley, Peter Snodgrass and John Goodman, M.'sL.C., Mr. A. K. Smith (Engineer), Mr. Hammill, and Dr. Thompson. Immediately after the meeting opened it was palpable to those present at the first meeting that Peter Snodgrass had been right in his contentions, and Claud Farie, the Sheriff, wrong. Captain Pasley, who was in the chair, said that he was of the opinion that assessors ought to be elected, and the business of the meeting proceeded without further argument. He did not think that there would be any difficulty in obtaining persons who would be found willing to undertake the working of the municipality for nothing. The sore point was that the Council had power to levy rates.

Mr. Snodgrass reminded the Commissioner that the Council was not obliged to levy rates.

The Commissioner (continuing) said: "Nine months ago, when the formation of this municipality was adjourned, it was stated that a great many houses were vacant. (A voice: 'There are more now.') That was the strongest reason why the meeting should not be further adjourned, for they might levy taxes as low as they liked. A sum of money had been placed on the estimates for the current year for the municipality of Prahran, and he had no doubt the sum would be carried. He only hoped they would elect such persons as they had confidence in."

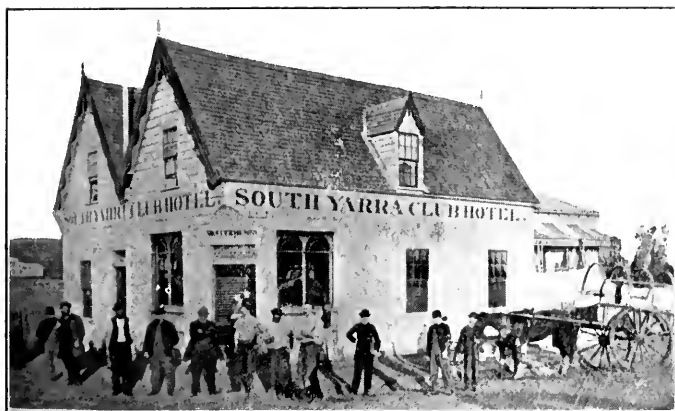
Mr. Johnson moved:—

“That in the opinion of this meeting Prahran is not in a position to accept a municipality, and that the motion affirming it, that was carried at the last meeting, should be rescinded.”

They were, in his (Johnson's) opinion a set of locusts in the desert, living on each other, and were not in a position to pay taxes. Prahran was not on the high road to any place. It was originally intended by the Government for market gardens, and to market gardens it must go. If a municipality were formed he must take down his house, and numerous others must do the same. (Cheers.) It cost a man who had to work in town 8/- per week to ride in and out, which was as much as it would cost him in rent in town. Where were the men who, nine months ago, were talking about being mayors and aldermen, and what had become of their property? (Cheers.)

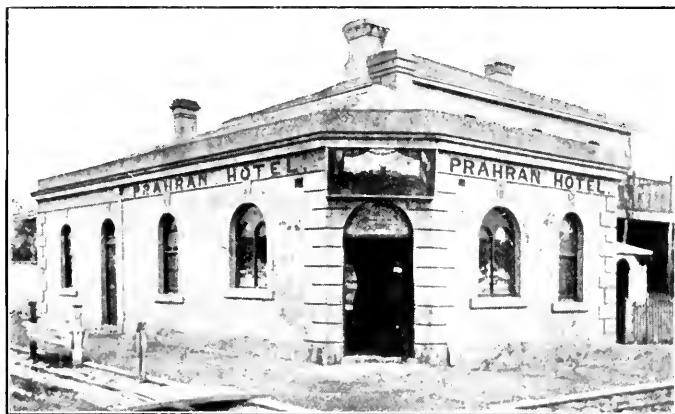
Mr. Howard seconded the resolution.

Mr. Goodman, M.L.C., said he had been waiting to hear some argument in favour of a municipality, but he had heard none. He entirely agreed with the sensible and telling speech by Mr. Johnson, and he wished to point out to them what they were about to do. They were about to nominate a set of men who would have the power of taxing them to the amount of 2/- in the pound, and the rate remained a fixed tax on property. Prahran was built in the dearest of times, and those men who had left houses worth £1,000 found them now not worth £100, and if a municipality was formed their owners would never come back to claim them.



SOUTH YARRA CLUB HOTEL

*W. Fitzhenry, Licensee*



PRAHRAN HOTEL

*W. Johnson, Licensee*



Mr. Snodgrass asked the speaker to point out the clause in the Act which constituted the rate a fixed tax on property.

Mr. Goodman replied that if the houses were occupied when the rate was made, another tenant, who might be in possession when the rate was levied, might be obliged to pay it. With the exception of Emerald Hill and East Collingwood, no place had taken any step to enforce the Act. The Government said, "The people won't tax themselves, and so we must throw them a bait." They accordingly placed a sum of £5,000 on the estimates, and after this the municipality would be thrown off altogether. But what would £5,000 do for them, or what would £20,000 do for them? He wished them to read the Act carefully. Not one of them could vote for councillors or assessors without they said their houses were worth £100. It was an erroneous impression, however, to suppose that property not worth £100 could not be taxed. The owner might be taxed while he could not vote.

Mr. Snodgrass said he was likely to become a ratepayer in Prahran. While he had a good road to his house, he wished his butcher and baker to have the same. There were many defects in the Act, but let them try to make it better; let them take the money the Government offered them. ("No," and interruption.) Prahran had worse roads than any other township he had ever visited, and the reason was that they had never taken any interest in it. Prahran had already been proclaimed a municipal district, and the only business they had to do was to elect officers. "No, no," and

uproar.) Then he would tell them what they must have. (Uproar.) By the 50th clause of the Act, it was enacted that if they did not elect officers within 30 days after accepting Government money, the Government had power to nominate five Commissioners to manage their affairs. Therefore he would advise them to elect men they could trust, and so defeat the consequence he had pointed out. They might elect men who would not levy a penny of taxes if they liked. There was not a single clause in the Act, however, which could not be twisted and turned into two or three different forms. The £5,000 placed on the estimates last year was not handed over by the Government because the district would not have it.

Mr. Goodman: "The Government had not got it."

Mr. Hammill argued that the expression of the meeting was perfectly unmistakable, and that expression was decidedly against the municipality. The speaker referred to the origin of Prahran as a township, and continued, "Prahran is a swamp." (Great uproar and hooting.) Nothing but a vast amount of money could make proper roads in Prahran. The people were originally obliged to take land in Prahran because, owing to the vile system of land jobbing which prevailed, they were obliged to put up with what they could get. He asked them to pause before they plunged themselves into irremediable confusion and debt.

Mr. Walker was surprised at the ignorance manifested by Mr. Goodman. There was a municipality at Sandhurst, another at Portland, and another at Warrnambool; and he hoped in a few days to have another

here. ("No," "Yes," and great uproar.) Instead of being a swamp, Prahran included some of the finest building land in the colony. One per cent. upon the value of property in Prahran would give £5,000 per annum. That sum would enable them to make one mile and a half of road in a year. He did not desire, however, to see a municipality created without the majority of the inhabitants spoke out in favour of it.

A gentleman, whose name the *Argus* reporter could not hear, denied that the position of Prahran had improved since nine months ago, when the formation of a municipality was postponed on account of the poverty of the place. If men accepted the working offices for nothing, it was with an ulterior view of getting something out of it. Prahran was not in a position to be taxed, and many of those who owned houses, who were at the diggings, would have their property taken away to support the men in office. For the few old wood carts, which went through Prahran, the streets were good enough, and he denied that more people would come there to live on account of a municipality. If they formed a municipality they would ultimately regret it.

Mr. Crews thought that stigmatising of Prahran as a swamp was not likely to benefit it very much: but how could they redeem it without taxing their pockets?

Mr. Canna could not see the wisdom of nominating a Council. He defied Mr. Snodgrass or fifty such men to put Prahran into commission for not electing a Council, and read from the Act that an assessment of

the district was necessary to be made before the Governor could nominate a commission.

Mr. Graham Berry said he was in favour of municipalities, but that night was not the one for electing the Council. The question they had to discuss was, "Was it advisable to create their district into a municipality?" The Government meeting for the election of the Council would take place on the 23rd inst., and this meeting would have to decide whether they were to have a real Council or not on that occasion. They had better put matches to their houses and burn them down at once\* than listen to Mr. Hammill's description of their locality as a "swamp." The Act was a sham. When the Act was passed every house in Prahran was worth £100, but it was notorious that there were a great many which were not worth that sum now, and those would virtually be defranchised. Until this clause was altered he would support an adjournment. (Cries of "Twelve months.")

Mr. Campbell compared the taxation to which they would be liable from the formation of a municipality to putting a shingle in the roof of their houses, or shoes on the children's feet. It amounted to acting for themselves to allow others to act for them. The absence of taxation had been the ruin of the place. He would support an adjournment to ascertain the wishes of the people.

Mr. Mason moved that the meeting adjourn to this day week. (Cries, "Twelve months.") That was not

\*The words recall the description of Melbourne after the "Berry Blight," "broken heads and flaming houses."



the time to adjourn till twelve months. They could not do so until the 23rd of the month. The Commissioner rose, apparently to put the motion of the adjournment, but he entertained those present with the question of ways and means. He complained that only £1/8/- had been subscribed to pay the expenses of their meeting, and he had actually spent £2/9/-!

Captain Pasley then put the motion whether the meeting should adjourn or not, which was carried in the affirmative. On the question as to what day the meeting should stand adjourned, the chairman reminded them that they must make a collection if they adjourned to that day week, but notwithstanding this, the adjournment to the 11th inst. was adopted by a large majority. Whether Prahran still owes the gallant Captain, or his estate, £1/1/-, the difference between the £1/8/- and the money out of his pocket, £2/9/-, is unknown, but doubtless the present generation will credit him with the guinea an hundredfold, and a spirit that did not quail when faced with a monetary loss *pro bono publico*!

The meeting is recorded as one that was very noisy throughout. The speakers were "assailed with sundry epithets while making their speeches." The time occupied was three hours and a quarter, the meeting finishing at a quarter to eleven o'clock, which meant, for those who attended, a walk home along unmade ways, in more or less darkness, by the aid of the lights from lanterns.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE BATTLE OF PRAHRAN CONTINUED—SPIRITED NEWSPAPER  
CONTROVERSY — PROGRESSIVES VICTORIOUS — FIRST COUNCIL  
ELECTED AT PUBLIC MEETING—POLL DEMANDED AND GRANTED  
—THE COUNCILLORS OF 1856.

THE important question whether Prahran was "to be or not to be" a municipality in the early part of the year 1856 grew to be a more absorbing topic every day. The bitterness with which the factional fight was waged between the Progressives and Obstructionists tempted the editors of the Melbourne newspapers to take part in the controversy, and the "Battle of Prahran" began to interest the whole of Melbourne. The antipathy of the *Argus* in those days to the squatting interests found a channel wherein to run in its caustic attacks on John Goodman, the leader of the Obstructionists. Goodman was a squatter in addition to being by profession a trade assignee. He had identified himself with the squatters' cause, and had acted as their mouthpiece. In William Kelly's book, "Life in Victoria," 1853-1858, he mentions a meeting held at the Port Phillip Club Hotel, in connection with diggers trespassing in the "undefined domains of squatters." He says: "Three millions sterling were the recognisances under which Mr. Goodman and Mr. Fellows, in the old Council, wanted to bind over the Legislature when discussing the New Constitution Bill, before they accorded it plenary powers of dealing with squatters' leases. Mr.

Goodman detailed the nature and extent of squatter grievance in terms of vulgar underbred flippancy." The latter part of the sentence is interesting as a side light upon the personality of the man who proved such a thorn in the side of the Prahran pioneers.

Goodman arrived in Melbourne in 1848, and took up land at the Devil's River, in the Goulburn District. Whether the Devil's River had anything in common with the Styx, or whether Goodman, in opposition, had anything in common with either, it is certain his enemies called him a "devil to fight." Goodman may or may not have possessed influence. Certainly he spoke frequently, and evoked much hostile criticism. He was the member for the Murray Electorate in 1856, and occupied the position of Commissioner of Trade and Customs for a very brief period, from February 25 to March 11, 1857—in the Ministerial team of William Clark Haines, a retired doctor, who had taken to farming. Goodman lived in a house he called "Miegumyah," situate in the Orrong Road, close to where the Toorak Railway Station was afterwards placed. He probably purchased the land from W. and J. Payne, Allotment 30, for he owned that block from Malvern Road, along Orrong and may be Canterbury Roads to Toorak Road. The imposition of rates would have fallen upon him rather heavily, while he would not derive much personal benefit therefrom. Gardiner's Creek Road was made, and in good condition, that step having been taken owing to the Vice-Regal residence having been chosen at Toorak. As already stated, £20,000 had

been spent in clearing and making the road to Melbourne a "way of peace," and Goodman, residing upon the skirts of the road, enjoyed the benefit of the outlay. He was thereby rendered content with Prahran as it was, without passable roads, and particularly without rates. When the Bill which legalised these municipalities was on its passage through Parliament House, Goodman, urged on and encouraged by his brother squatters, who were afraid that the trifling rates to be levied under the Act would in some directions trench upon their profits, according to the *Argus*, did all he could to throw out or spoil the bill. Having failed in that attempt when the movement for the emancipation of Prahran from its forlorn condition was begun, he opposed the constitution of the Council with the most bitter animosity. He even fought and parted with his personal friends over the question, notably Mr. Skinner, the author of "The Men of Prahran," whose son, Mr. G. L. Skinner, was destined years later to become a Mayor of Prahran. The agitation for a Council was warmly supported by the *Argus*, while the *Melbourne Morning Herald* affected to regard the whole affair as a storm in a tea-cup, and took the pains to state that the movement was a Peddlington affair, and small at that. The fact was, the *Argus* first saw the importance of local administration, and the *Herald*, jealous of its rival, affected disdain, and stood aloof. Under date February 4, the *Argus* says "There is something really disgraceful in the pertinacious endeavour of Mr. Goodman and the seven other spirits as wicked as himself to

condemn Prahran to a continuance of neglect and filth. We feel the greatest indignation at finding a gentleman of some ability and education committing himself to such advice to a community, many of the component parts of which are not so favoured in those respects as himself."

The article is too long to quote in its entirety, but the above extract shows the trend of public opinion. We obtain a view of Prahran in the remark that Goodman would endeavour to persuade the "good people of Prahran" that a state of "self-neglect and piggish dirtiness is their natural and most wholesome condition." They are urged to have ambitions above market gardens, and are told that if Goodman had his way he would have Prahran a sheep-walk. "Mr. Semi-Squatter Hammill," is termed Goodman's *Fidus Achates*, and he is trounced for calling Prahran a swamp, and that if it remains so it is a "swamp by the negligence and lethargy of the wise people sent to sleep by the 'sweet soothings' of these Hammill and Goodman conjurors." Interesting is it to note, "Whatever the original intention of the Government with reference to Prahran, it is now closely inhabited, and it, like the other suburbs of Melbourne, will doubtless retain a certain amount of population." We learn that the residents complained of empty houses, but the winter coming, "with its rains and pools and puddles will teach them that desolate as their streets may now appear, they may become still more so. The ill-name which they have already acquired for the dullness of their perceptions of the necessity of cleanliness will amount

to a perceptible percentage off their rents." This philippic of the *Argus* against Goodman and Hammill, concludes with the prophecy, recalling Macaulay's traveller from New Zealand, who is pictured as taking his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's. "A little more persistence in such a course and a rich soil will be prepared for the smiling crops of garden produce which will follow the track of the Goodman plough as it forces its way amongst the hearth-stones of the men who are now weak enough to listen to his counsels." It affords amusing reading to-day, but when the ink with which it was written was scarcely dry, the verbal stings stung the Obstructionists. The columns of the *Argus* were closed to them, so they sought the aid of the *Melbourne Morning Herald*, and in it tried to retaliate. They did so in a letter under date February 9, and signed "Mrs. McClarty," whose sentences are somewhat involved. Drawing conclusions from the verbiage in the latter part of the letter, "Mrs. McClarty" was evidently a medical man eager to take up a lance on behalf of the Obstructionists. The "lady" thus plunges into the lists, leading off with a quotation:—

"Prone to dispute and stubbornly persist  
And end debate with logic of the fist—  
So runs an old ballad, and  
I've been told by knowing stagers  
Fools for arguments use wagers."

says Hudibras, and he, like Quixote, was rather fond of running amok to serve a friend. Hard names are also among the weapons of the querulous, and the great object with those who resort to their use is to get the start. 'Mother,' said the girl at Billingsgate, 'call

her a fag, or she will call you one directly.' A true Peddlington battle has been waging for some time in the village of Prahran, and the *Argus*, with the magnanimity of true greatness, has descended to mix in the fray. . . . Thus one of the combatants who fights because he sees the choicest lands around Melbourne occupied by the stately mansion, the imposing Government edifice, or the solitary church, while the masses congregate on a broad valley, 'considerably elevated above the river,' in plain words, a swamp, or a flat, where they patiently await the deluge that will sweep them onwards to Hobson's Bay, or on a little green isle encompassed by undrained morasses and quagmires, and because he thinks it was an unfortunate policy which so held the lands from the people, that they were driven to such inhospitable places, and that it would be as well if they could abandon them for more suitable places, he is assailed with what is intended for withering invective, as an encourager of filthy and degenerate habits. But which shows the more philanthropy? He who boldly speaks the plain truth, or he who tries to reconcile the people to cretinism of even a well-drained swamp? . . . Such, Sir, was the first onslaught of the great Batrachian Triton as he waged war amongst the mudlarks and tadpoles in this great battle of the swamp."

The Progressives' honorary secretary, David G. Stobie, followed, with a tilt at Goodman, but he failed in newspaper warfare, for he did not carry the battle much further, though he was allowed about a column and a half in which to make the attempt. The sum

total of his attack was that Goodman was afraid of the imposition of rates, and so opposed the incorporation of the municipality. By this time this "harping upon my daughter"—the rates and Goodman—were mouldy and stale as invective.

On February 12, the second adjourned meeting of residents was held in the "Alley," to consider the course to be pursued at the ensuing Government meeting for the election of councillors on the 23rd inst. The room was crowded, and Mr. Chapman, M.L.C., was in the chair. Amongst those present were Mr. Goodman, M.L.C., Mr. Rusden, Clerk of the Executive Council, Messrs. Dickson, Hammill, Walker, and "several merchants and tradesmen." James Mason, who was identified with Prahran from the first, told the meeting that they "all knew the character of Mr. Goodman, the 'thunderer' of the squatters, whose speech at the last meeting was a perfect piece of claptrap, for it was only his ignorance and impudence combined which induced him to make such a speech." This was straight talking to Mr. Goodman's face, and there were demonstrations for him, and counter-demonstrations made by "hisses and cheers." Mason, who was determined to have his say, pointed out that five or six different railway lines were proposed by different companies to be built through Prahran, and that Goodman was a member of one, and as such was looking after its interests. He alleged that the Obstructionists tried to mislead the residents. "The assessments would be on the present annual value of their property, and not as many had supposed, on its market



value. That sum would be well laid out for the prevention and removal of nuisances, let alone road and street making." A neighbour had told him it had cost him more to repair his fence in order to keep out pigs and cows within the past two years than he had earned in Prahran. Mason concluded by moving:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable to proceed at once to the municipalisation of the district."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Dickson, who stated that by and by a toll would be placed in the main road which would bring in a revenue of from £1,500 to £2,000 per year, and he saw no reason why they should not take it." Then Mr. Dickson entered into a prophetic strain, and to him probably must be awarded the first vision of a Greater Melbourne. He said that he advocated a municipality for Prahran because in five years' time he hoped to see all the corporations of the suburbs—Emerald Hill, East Collingwood, Prahran, etc., in a position to be created into one gigantic municipality, as had been done with so much success in Glasgow. The motion was carried by a large majority.

Though their path had been a contested one, the Progressives were well on the way to victory. The Obstructionists, however, led by Goodman, showed all the opposition their wits could devise. The *Argus* did not feel sure that the victory would, in the end, remain with the Progressives. On the morning of February 21, the evening of the eventful meeting, its editor solemnly warned Prahran residents:—

"There is already a spell upon the place, thanks mainly to its unimproved condition. Let that once be confirmed, and the people will find it more and more

difficult to get a living by residing there themselves, or let their houses to anyone else. They will find out their mistake when too late, and wish undone that which they may possibly decide upon doing to-night. The title deeds of their little property will not be worth much in the hands of the auctioneer, when the retrogression policy having resulted in the depopulation of the place, Mr. Hammill is able to take a day's snipe shooting in his favourite "swamp," when Mr. Goodman digs up his celery in the deserted cemetery, and cuts his cauliflowers in what was once a school."

On Thursday, February 21, the meeting which was to have such an effect on the future destinies of Prahran took place in the Church of England building. The chairman was Captain Pasley. Captain Parker and Mr. Walker were elected assessors. Mr. Sargood, M.L.C., moved that the Municipal Councils do consist of seven members, which motion James Mason seconded.

John Goodman at once rose to his feet, and stated it would not be fair to go to Windsor, or to Murphy's paddock (Punt Hill), and tax the inhabitants there for making the streets of Prahran. (Cheers and hisses.) He moved an amendment to the effect that the appointment of the Councillors be adjourned for six months. That motion was seconded by Dr. William Thompson, while a "man named King" (he will be remembered at the first meeting) said there were persons in Prahran who could not supply their families with meat three times a week, and he was sure those and the poorer classes could not afford to pay taxes. "Mr. Skinner, a barrister," spoke in favour of a municipality, and urged

that a tax of 10/- or 5/- a year would give them fine roads, a well-organised body of police, streets free from stumps, and inhabitants to fill their vacant houses. Land that was not worth then £1 per acre would be worth £10 if the municipality was well managed. Hammill said that after they had received the Government Grant of £5,000, the Government intended to let them tax themselves, and give the municipality no more assistance. Peter Snodgrass denied that, and said there was £10,000 at the back of the £5,000. He added that as the opponents to the movement had succeeded in having it postponed for nine months, he was sorry to see the gentlemen who opposed them present in the same office at the latest meeting. Mr. Sargood said the opposition came with bad grace from a gentleman who hoped some short time ago to hang on the skirts of a Ministry. Why, he would ask, had they not their main roads made before? Why, because there had been a conspiracy between squatters and Government officers to get the money expended elsewhere, and now one of that immaculate body came forward to propose the amendment. The Opposition was led off by a gentleman (Goodman) who lived on the skirts of a road (the vice-regal Gardiner's Creek Road) which had cost £20,000, and which had been paid by them.

The amendment was lost, and the motion was carried.

Mr. Snodgrass moved, and Mr. J. B. Crews seconded:—"That no member of the Council receive any pay." Carried.

Election of councillors was then proceeded with.

Mr. Dickson moved, and Mr. Campbell seconded:—"That Mr. Sargood be a member." Carried unanimously.

The names of Messrs. Berry, Snodgrass, Crews, Cooke, Richard Chomley, and J. L. F. Foster, were put and carried.

The following were named, but voted out:—Messrs. Oliver, Craven, Palmer, Mason, Izett, Frank Stephen, Mortimer, and Pye.

The following declined to act:—Messrs. Dickson, Hammill, and Goodman.

Captain Pasley, the chairman, declared the first seven duly elected. The meeting, however, amidst much uproar, clamoured for a poll. The chairman said he did not think such a course desirable, yet if the majority desired it, a poll might be had. On a vote being taken, the chairman intimated that the meeting desired a poll by a large majority. He therefore ordered the poll to be taken the following morning, in the Bowling Alley, Chapel Street, the booth to open at eight o'clock, and to close at four o'clock.

Other residents who were nominated as candidates were: Messrs. Mortimer, Smith, Moyle, Parker, Foxton, Thomson, and Skinner. The poll took place the following day, as ordered by Captain Pasley, and he was in charge of the booth, having with him Messrs. Parker and Walker as assessors. After the doors of the booth were opened, and some votes had been recorded, Mr. Foxton sent a letter to Captain Pasley, desiring him to acquaint the electors with the fact that he declined to act if elected, and there was no reason for them to



JOHN BRANSCOMBE CREWS

*The First Mayor of Prahran*



throw away their votes in his favour. Nevertheless, 37 electors did so, the note having been affixed to the Bowling Alley door too late to warn them. The retirement of Foxton at the eleventh hour reduced the number of candidates to 20, who went to the poll.

At four o'clock the poll closed, and the returning officer told the waiting crowd that he was unable to ascertain the number of votes the candidates had received. He must have been somewhat slow, for even early Prahran, for the number of persons who voted was only 585, consisting of 573 males and 12 females. The residents, were, however, promised that the official declaration would take place at nine o'clock the following morning.

We read in the press that:—

“The usual quiet of the streets suffered no disturbance, and save in the vicinity of the polling place, no signs of an election were to be observed. The usual election placards and carriages conveying electors were entirely absent, and save the very modest little bill announcing that Mr. Cooke, if elected, would pledge himself to vote for a sixpenny rate only, until the inhabitants had an opportunity of deciding upon the amount they were willing to bear, the assistance of the printer had not been called in.”

The official declaration of the poll was announced, as promised, at nine o'clock on Saturday morning (February 23, 1856), as follows:—

Messrs. Sargood, 296; Mason, 236; Pye, 204; Crews, 173; Izett, 158; Snodgrass, 151; Oliver, 138. These

seven constitute the Council of Prahran. Palmer, 137; Smith, 129; Craven, 116; Stephen, 101; Chomley, 96; Berry, 90; Thomson, 68; Cooke, 49; Moyle, 44; Foxton, 39; Skinner, 39; Mortimer, 15; Parker, 15.

Mr. Sargood was elected for three years, Messrs. James Mason, William Robertson Pye and J. B. Crews for two years, and Messrs. Andrew Izett, Peter Snodgrass and William Oliver for one year.

Mr. Sargood, in addition to being the first chairman of the Prahran Council, was also a member of the first Legislative Assembly when the colony was granted the privilege of responsible Government. He was a man, as his acts show, of great public spirit and private integrity, a reputation his son, the late Sir Frederick Sargood, also enjoyed, and worthily upheld. Mr. Sargood's house was in Dandenong-road, a mansion in those days, surrounded by ample grounds. Mr. J. B. Crews was born in Newfoundland, but his father was a Devonshire man. He arrived in Melbourne in 1852, where he found employment at his trade, that of a printer, in the Government Printing Office. He afterwards started as a baker in a shop which he erected in Chapel Street, next to where the Town Hall now stands. The block between his shop and Greville Street was then vacant. The land in Chapel Street, from Greville Street to High Street, was owned by T. B. Payne, and was available at £1 per foot. An allotment of 50 feet was purchased by Edward Stabb and Crews at the ruling rate in 1853, and it was on his half, 25 feet, that Mr. Crews built his bakehouse. He was induced to settle in Prahran in 1853, on the representations of a good



trade opening made by the father of ex-Councillor Samuel Willis, who, years afterwards, during his Mayoralty (1879), proclaimed Prahran a city. Mr. Crews is well remembered by numbers of the present generation as a very old, but strongly built, man, with a large-featured face, carrying a straggling white beard. His appearance was remarkable also, on account of his wearing a black belltopper of an ancient broad-brimmed pattern. The early interest he manifested in Prahran was active, as we shall see, to the last. He was a staunch, life-long friend to the blind, and the irony of fate was such that in his latter days he also was sightless. This one-time active man made a pathetic picture as he was led, feeble, almost tottering, up High-street, to the little brick cottage wherein he passed his remaining days, dying, at 90 years, on September 29, 1905. William Robinson Pye lived close to where the High Street bridge crosses the railway line, High Street then being known as High Holborn Road, and previous to that it was called the Middle Dandenong Road. Next door to Mr. Pye's residence was the Crown Hotel, the licensee of which was Peter King, who was a great hunting man. He afterwards became a hotelkeeper at Gardiner, his hostelry being opposite what is now the Caulfield race-course.

At the top of the hill that rejoiced in the name of Victoria Terrace, and which hill at the Chapel Street bridge is now being converted into bricks, while on the river side a roadway has been delved out for the purpose of connecting the river boulevard, the Alexandra Avenue, with Chapel Street, Peter Snodgrass had his

home. He only served in the Council the term he was elected for, viz., one year. Andrew Izett resided at the corner of Izett Street and Commercial Road, and though unlike Snodgrass he stood for re-election when his term, one year, had expired, the ratepayers of 1857 rejected him. William Oliver was a publican in Punt Road, where he was the licensee of the Windsor Hotel. Evidently he was also a sinner in the municipal sense, for the ballot box of 1857 convinced him that the ratepayers considered his period of public usefulness over. James Mason was also a publican, the builder and licensee of the well-known Royal George Hotel, Chapel Street. He came from Walsall, Staffordshire, and was a tailor by trade. A man of public spirit in all he undertook, he was irascible when events failed to happen as he desired. His platform courage was undoubted, as witness his attack on John Goodman. He represented the Prahran district in Parliament in '58-59. when Sir John O'Shanassy's Ministry was in power. He retired from the Prahran Council in 1861, and is now (1911) a very old man, being 91 years of age, living at St. Kilda, the only survivor of Prahran's first councillors.

To resume. We see the Prahran Council thus brought into being, notwithstanding all the political machinations and local intriguing of the Obstructionists. As if rejoicing in its birth, the newly elected Council held its initial meeting on the Monday following the Saturday when the result of the poll was declared, namely, Monday, February 25. On that occasion Cr. Sargood was elected chairman, the motion being moved by Cr. Snodgrass and seconded by Cr. Crews. The Council

decided to meet on Saturdays each week at five o'clock. Crs. Crews and Mason were deputed to solicit the temporary use of the Mechanics' Institute as a meeting chamber. So we learn that the Prahran Council, when first elected, had nowhere to lay its infant head, and had to beg, to "solicit" the authorities of the Mechanics to let them have a room wherein to transact business. On March 15, the Council appointed Mr. John Craven to act as Town Clerk, at £150 per annum. Mr. C. Bruce Skinner was appointed standing counsel, and Mr. John Westmore, solicitor. Mr. Hodgkinson, consulting engineer, and Mr. John Hwynneth, surveyor; Mr. M. A. Richardson, rate collector; and Major Charles Dukes, health officer. Sergeant Dowling was appointed inspector of nuisances, and the bank selected was the Colonial Bank of Australasia. At this time the area of the city was  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles. The Government held five acres of land, and the population was about 8,000. How John Goodman regarded all this may perhaps be gleaned from the fact that an advertisement appeared in the *Argus* of February 26, the day after the first meeting of the Prahran Council, wherein Messrs. Tennent and Co., who conducted a large number of the Government sales of land, announced that under instructions from John Goodman, Esq., M.L.C., they had for disposal a highly cultivated orchard and garden of 10 acres, situated in Gardiner's Creek Road, near Toorak, upon which was a house of 13 rooms. The advertisement was not so flowery as one of Auctioneer Stubbs

and Co., describing some Prahran land they had for sale:—

“Where he who tills the soil with care and seeds in earth enfold  
Receives a full and quick return in sheaves of wavy gold.”

But it is quite possible that Mr. Goodman, as the beaten champion of the Obstructionists, did not regard ownership of land in Prahran in quite the same roseate light. The land in question was not sold at the time. Goodman lived long enough to become a councillor of Prahran, and to say at a public meeting, held in 1869, “that his own conversion from a feeling inimical to municipal institutions was brought about by seeing their admirable workings. He had helped to keep back their introduction, believing them to be premature, but he had seen the error of his ways, and repented.” He also said that he would never sell his land until a railway went through it, and that also came to pass, for the Oakleigh railway line, when made years afterwards, ran through his property, and he received for the “hurt” he suffered, handsome compensation from the Government.

## CHAPTER VII.

PRAHRAN'S COMMERCE IN THE EARLY FIFTIES—SOME OF THE FIRST  
TRADESMEN—WINDSOR AND COMMERCIAL ROAD JEALOUSIES  
—THE WATER SUPPLIES—HAWKSBURN AND TOORAK: WHY SO  
NAMED.

PRAHRAN is not mentioned in a map published by T. Ham in 1847, though South Yarra, St. Kilda and Brighton have a local habitation and a name. At that time a few houses or huts had been erected at South Yarra and St. Kilda, but Prahran was still a bush of gums, wattles, native cherry trees and sheoaks, with ti-trees in the swamps. The Government sale of '49 and '50 released the lands, and it was after those sales, when Crown sections were further sub-divided, that small capitalists found an opportunity to become property holders. At the latter end of 1850, according to an "Old Identity" (in the *Prahran Telegraph*, October 12, 1889), "there were ten dwellings, besides several others scattered over the district, in the immediate neighbourhood of what is now called Chapel Street, and on the north side of the present Commercial Road." These dwellings were built of wattle and dab, or paling humpies. One of the latter still stands in the small right-of-way alongside No. 1 Market Street. Material for building was very scarce. Most of the houses erected were queer collections of odds and ends of wood, and windows of strange and curious patterns. Even this humpy, now serving as a wash-house, has a

small window of prehistoric appearance. Sterne is said to have, or really did, grow sentimental over a dead ass. Without going so far, a touch of romance with the past invests this link now hidden away in one of the back streets of the busy thoroughfares. Within a few yards is the throbbing market place, yet when the humpy was erected, Prahran practically was not. In front of the humpy is a more pretentious building, but still old-fashioned to-day. They are amongst the relics of early Prahran, and have the further distinction, too, of having remained all the time in one family—passing from father to son—the Elts.

Mr. W. B. Withers, writing from Sydney, says: "In 1853 I was sometimes dray-driving in the Prahran neighbourhood, when the locality was still very much in its original bush state. I was thus employed when the line of the present road from Princes Bridge to St. Kilda Junction was being cleared of bush, and the felling and grubbing and blasting of trees was in busy progress. At that time there was a building called the Miall Hotel, standing all alone, and as seen from the St. Kilda track already mentioned, apparently in, or near, what I take to be the line of Punt Road. No other building of notable size was there visible thereabouts as far as my memory goes, but here and there a tent or hut showed that settlement of a rough sort was in the beginning amongst the rather scanty bush of the locality. Settlement soon grew rapidly, and in 1854 I had a short spell of residence on the Windsor side, with plenty of elbow room, and no end of old tree stumps, to ply my axe upon for fireside uses."

Mr. Withers's interesting note enables Prahran, from the west side, to be easily visualised. The picture of bush, with a hut here and a tent there, with perhaps a little clearing, is sufficiently Australian to be grasped by Australians. The hotel he mentions, "the 'Miall,' was a rendering of My-all, meaning thereby that the builder had risked his all in the venture." The name on the hotel sign was "Myall," which is the name of a scrub tree, and was further used to indicate a "wild black," an aboriginal who came from the bush, in contradistinction to one who hung about the skirts of civilisation. The house was built by B. J. Benton, who sold the place to Harry Paynter, who had a brickyard in Moss Street. Paynter's intention was to use the building for a store, but he changed his mind, and turned the place into a hotel. Some time afterwards the structure of wattle and dab gave way to a two-storied weatherboard house. Its situation was the south-east corner of Punt and Commercial Roads. The land opposite the hotel was known as the Myall green, held greatly in favour for sports. One incident is always mentioned in connection with its history, viz., the roasting of a whole bullock on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's marriage (1863). When nearly cooked the bullock slipped off the triangles upon which it was suspended into the ashes and dirt. The roasted carcase did not tempt many, but the aboriginals who were gathered round the fire had a gluttonous feed. Benton leased the land from Caldwell, a wine merchant, who must have purchased the corner allotment from D. W. Donald, who was the Crown grantee of Block

39. Donald sub-divided the block, and plotted the streets, which he named Alfred, after "Prince Alfred," the "Sailor Prince," that of Donald Street after himself, and Perth Street from his native Perthshire. Athol Street, which has dropped its final "e", it should be Athole, in memory of the beautiful district in the north of Perthshire that gives the title of duke to a branch of the Murray clan.

Prahran was fortunate in the march of events. The much despised swamps meant damp ground, and where there is damp ground clay will generally be found. With a city rapidly growing up on the other side of the river, bricks were required. Prahran, early in its history, set to brick-making in real earnest. At the time of the gold discoveries, bricks were selling at £20 per thousand in Prahran. The manufacturers of bricks required kilns in which to burn them, and wood for the fires. The hungry furnace maws of brick kilns consume tons of wood, and so it came to pass that Prahran not only enjoyed the profits of brick-making, but at the same time the district was being cleared of timber. The smoke by day, the glare by night of the brick kilns, at all points of the compass, was a notable impression of early Prahran. One of the most important brickyards was that of Hart and Preston. Immediately below the toll gate, near the Richmond Bridge, Chapel Street, it was on the east side of the road, now called Malcolm Street. Many millions of bricks were won from the hole, now filled up. Boyd Street, in its immediate neighbourhood, was named after H. Boyd, who lived hard by. Another well remembered brickmaker,



one of the "originals," was "Old Sam Orton," who for many years had one of the kilns near the Orrong Road that in latter days were looked upon as an eyesore, and a source of smoke nuisance. Then there was the brick kiln of "Daddy Davis," corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street, still active to-day, as the clay is of a fine quality. In Chapel Street itself, about one hundred yards south from the Town Hall, was a small shallow hole (Mulbarn's), from where the clay for bricks was taken. When the foundations of the defunct Federal Bank building were being excavated, a rusty pick and shovel were dug out of the clay, relics of the past, when the man put down his tools and laboured no longer in that hole.

Before the advent of the brick-making industry, wood was a commercial asset. Carters with bullock teams overcame the difficulties of bush roads with their loads for Melbourne town; wood boats were also used on the Yarra as a means of transport. In the pastoral days a good load of wood was obtainable for 5/-; after the gold rushes a load of firewood brought as many pounds as it once did shillings. Then, too, market gardens came into existence, and 12/- and 18/- a dozen for Prahran cabbages meant that the little settlement was making money. Wood carters, brickmakers and market gardeners were all doing well. Naturally, commerce, in the shape of tradesmen, was not long in following the settlers, who appreciated the advantage of having stores in their midst. The hewers of wood required the services of the drawers of water. The Yarra was the first source of supply. The walk to the river with a couple

of buckets for the day's supply is remembered by such men as ex-Mayor E. L. Vail, now in his 82nd year. The barrel mounted on wheels came next, and it was a common sight, creaking over bush ruts, with a week's water supply. The trouble the settlers experienced was to diminish the evaporation during hot weather. Usually the casks were sunk half-way in the ground. Casks had to be cleaned out before they were filled afresh, and that task, and filling the barrel, cost at first 8/- per load. The Yarra water was good water, but the barrels became very foul when the water was almost exhausted. However, Prahran managed to exist on the contents of the barrels, the settlers' own tank services, and water from clay holes, until 1855. In that year the South Yarra waterworks was incorporated, the Royal assent being given in May. The pumping house was on top of the hill, Forest Hill, beside where Chapel Street bridge now is. The company erected a stand pipe just where the Oakleigh line crosses Chapel Street. The watercarts used to back in under the service hose, were filled, and then the drivers went hawking the water from house to house. The man who had charge of this stand pipe was a Mr. Balderson, whose two daughters are still alive. They remember when most of the cooking of the settlement was done out of doors; three-legged camp ovens and nail cans were the common kitchen utensils.

The report of the first half-yearly general meeting of the South Yarra Water Supply Company lies before us. We learn that "there had been expended £12,000 in the purchase and completion of the works, plant and

machinery, for the supply of water to the public. A main line of pipes had been laid to St. Kilda, additional steam power had been obtained, and a tank erected on a site of ground granted by the Government to the Company, at the Junction at St. Kilda."

Now we have an opportunity of gleanings from the report the position that Prahran occupied, and its importance from a commercial point of view, with the water supply directorate plying their company's water for profit in the year 1855. The report proceeds: "Your Committee, conceiving that the populous districts of Windsor, St. Kilda and Brighton would be benefited, and the risks incidental to crowded houses greatly diminished, has, with a view to encouraging insurance companies to accept risks, erected the tank at St. Kilda, to afford an immediate supply of water." The point of interest is that Prahran as a separate hamlet is not mentioned. The secretary of the company was Sam. R. Herdsman; the directors, Frederick Cooper, Thomas Davies, John Greenlaw Foxton, William Hughes; auditors, Alexander Kennedy, D. A. Hughes. In 1856, January 21, according to an *Argus* advertisement, the company "wanted a stoker, apply at the South Yarra Waterworks, opposite Ayres Arms, Toorak Road." The Prahran Council and the Company were not on good terms, as we shall see later.

There may have been jealousy between them, for the Council erected a pump at Yarra Street that cost £43, and thereby became opposition traders of water. That pump was in charge of Donald Munro. Yarra Street was a busy and important street in the early days of

the Council. The Council erected a wharf there at a cost of £124/8/-, in order to facilitate the use of the Yarra water way as a means of bringing goods from Melbourne, the merchandise being landed at the Yarra wharf. The following notification has a quaint flavour, almost the whiff of a seaport town:—

“A by-law for regulating the landing of passengers, and delivery and shipment of stone, timber, and other merchandise at the Yarra Wharf.”

The by-law in question was not approved by the Governor-in-Council, as the Board of Works stated there were clauses in the by-law that governed the control of the river, such control being vested in the Board. Fortunately the Board made no demur about the water drawn from the river, otherwise the Council could not have sold the fluid at 9d. and 1/- a load. As time went on the purity of the Yarra water was affected by the growing settlements along its banks. The lees of wool washing and the scum of scouring up the river made the fluid unfit for use, and a menace to health. The completion of the Yan Yean scheme finally ended the South Yarra waterworks supply and the municipal pumps. When this boon of Yan Yean reticulation came along, Munro took charge, until his death, of the municipal pound, situated on the present site of Grattan Street Gardens. Munro and his wife lived in Arthur Street, in a two-roomed hut. He subsequently bought land in Pine Street, where he built three houses, living in one. Evidently he wrote home to Auld Reekie, for his son James and his wife arrived in 1858 or '59, and they rented from Donald the cottage at the corner of Hazeldene Place. The late Hon. James

Munro, politician, Premier, banker, building society promoter, and "land boomer," started his colonial career as the owner of a small grocery business in Prahran. That was not a success, for the future Premier of Victoria drifted into a printing office seeking employment, when he was not above taking a paste bucket and brush and sticking up bills on suitable buildings. A coincidence may be here referred to, viz., that Graham Berry, later to become "Sir," was also a grocer in Prahran. At first he was not licensed to sell alcoholic liquors, but he could always find a bottle for a trusted customer, whereas James Munro was a life-long abstainer, and active enemy to intoxicating drinks. Berry made several attempts to enter the Council, but the Prahran ratepayers always rejected him.

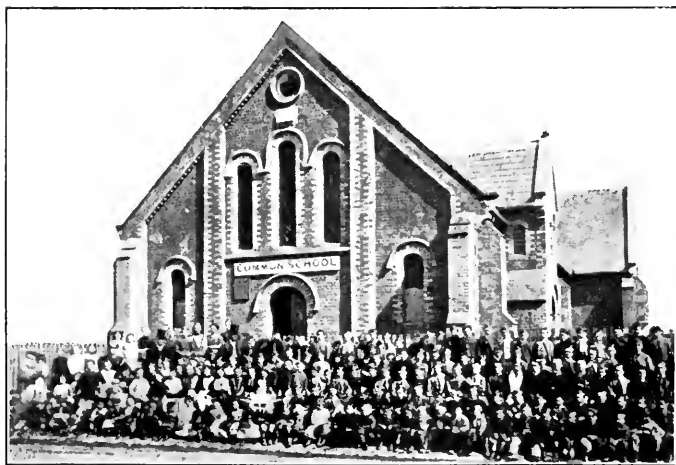
The "Ayres Arms" Hotel referred to in the advertisement for a stoker was the first two-storied brick building in Prahran, and Ayres was its first licensee. It still stands to-day, with its old English-like area entrance. "Ayres Arms" was built by James Chambers, who, when the Church Street Bridge to Richmond was opened, became its licensee, and re-christened it the "New Bridge Hotel," a name the place is still known by. Chambers purchased the land where the hotel is built from Peter Davis, in 1849, who bought the Crown section 36, of which it was a part, also in 1849, at £7/10/- per acre, Chambers paying him for six acres, that included the corner, £12/10/-. Starting from the New Bridge Hotel, the allotments, 6½ acres each, were bought in the following order:—James Chambers,

£12/10/- per acre; W. Clifford, £10/10/-; Andrew Johns, £10/10/-; J. and R. Ellis, £10/10/-; Francis, Greenwood and Crook, £10/10/-; E. Barry, £10/10/-; and J. Nelson, the last block, at the north-west corner of Commercial Road, opposite the Prahran Hotel, for £12. Of the 6½ acres purchased by Greenwood and Crook, Francis being the richest, retained 4½ acres, Greenwood and Crook, 1 acre each. Chambers turned his 6½ acres, less land necessary for the hotel requirements, into a market garden. It extended from the back of the hotel along to the Oakleigh railway line, and to Chambers Street. He was an active, enterprising man, and his energy was utilised in undertaking contracting work for the Prahran and Melbourne Councils. Near the hotel in Gardiner's Creek Road, Claud Farie erected a two-storied building, which was subsequently occupied by Mrs. Payne and her sons. T. B. Payne was the eldest son, and the first of the family to arrive in the colony. The Paynes in Ireland were farmers. His account of the new country, in his home letters, was so favourable that they all emigrated. T. B. Payne has related that the first work he ever did in the colony was to tend a flock of sheep while grazing over the hill opposite the *Argus* Office, in Collins Street. The other two sons were John and William. The three speculated freely in Prahran lands. For instance, T. B. Payne purchased from J. H. Rose, Section 55, and Peter Davis, Section 62, which two sections extended from High Street to Dandenong Road, having a frontage to Williams Road. According to T. B. Payne's solicitor, the intelligent octogenarian, ex-Councillor E. L. Vail,



PUNT ROAD, LOOKING SOUTH, ABOUT 1860

*The Iron Fence on the west, encloses Christ Church, South Yarra*



ST. MATTHEW'S OLD CHURCH AND SCHOOLROOM,  
CHAPEL STREET

*On the Site where Osment Buildings now stand*





it was T. B. Payne who ran Lewisham Road half-way through the High Street block, and then carried the road through to Dandenong Road. For some reason that has escaped Mr. Vail's memory, Payne christened the road Lewisham, after a place in Kent. The Paynes' purchases, as the unearned increment compounded interest, made them wealthy men, specially so T. B. Payne, who passed an examination as a conveyancer, became a lender of money, with a reputation of being strict and punctilious in demanding that each party to the transaction should observe the letter of the bond in time, interest and principal. He did not identify himself with the movements of the day, though he paid something (in memory of his deceased daughter) towards the cost of the spire on Christ Church, South Yarra, as well as founding the Payne theological scholarship.

James Chambers leased the New Bridge Hotel to John Disher, and the place has since passed through many hands. The present Councillor and ex-Mayor, S. A. Chambers, is a son of James Chambers. On the opposite corner of Chapel Street and Gardiner's Creek Road, on the east side, is still the brick one-storied building erected by Graham Berry for the purposes of a store. Before he settled there he had a much more airy abode at the corner of what is now Great Davis Street and Toorak Road, but which was then a gully. Here he sought trade in a tent. He left the tent to open a store at the corner of Ralston Street and Toorak Road, South Yarra.

One of the ambassadors of commerce in the primitive settlement was William Frederick Ford, a man who is known to some of the pioneers by the somewhat exaggerated title of "The Father of Prahran." He came from South Australia in 1850, and it was he who opened the first produce store in Prahran. He had a reputation as a hustler, and as one taking an active interest in public affairs. His name appears upon the petition for the formation of a Prahran Road Board. Affairs were unsettled in Prahran in '54, as is evinced by one thing in common with others, that in June of the same year 121 letters were lying in the Dead Letter Office, addressed to persons in Prahran who had deserted their known addresses for the diggings. Ford, too, after the meeting, joined the flying hosts of diggers on the way to Forest Creek. The settlers, if we can credit something of what we are told, were free with their titles, for we have another man in the fifties who was called the "King of Prahran." His name was Willoughby, and he opened the first grocer's shop in the place now known as College Lawn. The gift of eloquence was his, and he enjoyed the task of public speaking. Many residents had their Sunday dinners baked at his shop for the fee of one shilling, the baking being done by his assistant, named Schnellennpfeil. That young man saw that such a name in a British settlement would be a hindrance to trade, so he abbreviated it into John Pfeil, and as John Pfeil he lived to be one of the best-known bakers in Prahran. Ford passed like a shadow. How he fared, or what became of him afterwards, is not written. The rush to the

diggings depleted Prahran. As a group of gold-seekers, the Prahranites were not, if we credit the memory of old pioneers, favoured with much luck in the way of striking "jewellers' shops." One authentic record remains of a man who brought back gold to Prahran, and his name is W. H. Chandy. He settled on a piece of land, the corner of Walker Street, with a frontage of 28 feet to Chapel Street, for which site he gave one pound of gold in its native unmined state. That gold he obtained at the Fiery Creek diggings. Upon the land he built two small paling rooms, and then married the woman of his choice. The happy pair entertained their friends, but the "breakfast," and subsequent gaiety, took place out of doors, as the paling rooms were almost too small for even the couple who proposed to occupy them. White's veterinary surgery and forge was opposite to Chandy's, north of the "Big Store." Alongside the forge was a fine grove of wattle trees, which—

"In spring, when the wattle gold trembled  
"Twixt shadow and shine."

made the forge and its surroundings very picturesque. Though the grove has disappeared, Wattle Street remains as a permanent in memoriam of its past existence. Hard by was a stockyard, built by a man named Hawkins.

According to an old record, early in 1849, a William Jennings obtained authority to run cattle, chop wood and dig clay for bricks, at Prahran. Whether William erected a hut or not is information that is beset in past mists, but if he did so it was probably the first shelter for man, outside blacks' mia mias, in Prahran proper.

We know from William Westgarth's valuable reminiscences that there were houses dotted about South Yarra in 1844. The late Joseph Crook, with his father, always claimed to have built the first house in Prahran, Chapel Street, in the year '49. As we have seen the Crooks purchased land from Peter Davis in 1849, who bought the Crown Block 36 on June 27 of that year. The Crooks passed the first night in their newly-erected house on August 22, 1849. The same week the whole of the inhabitants consisted of three families, Messrs. Greenwood, Francis and Crook, fellow emigrants to Victoria in the same ship. At the time of the great flood, November 28, 1849, Prahran contained, besides those mentioned, Messrs. Howard, Anthony, Nelson and T. Parsons. In June, 1850, the inhabitants, in addition to those above mentioned, were Messrs. J. Chambers, Sutton, Barron, Chandy, J. Ellis, Wilson, Clifford, Jones, Manley, and Darvill, all of whom had built primitive houses. Greenwood was a draper, who has the distinction of being the father of the first white boy born in Prahran, and of the first two born in Chapel Street. The birth of the first girl took place about the same time in 1850. Her birth was almost contemporaneous with the first fire of a dwelling. Her parents had a tent pitched about where the market is in Commercial Road. The husband had placed a number of branches about the place for shelter. The leaves, dry as tinder, were suddenly ignited by a spark from the camp fire. The woman, lying ill inside, barely escaped with her life. Two days afterwards she gave birth to the girl in question. The first

death recorded is that of Mrs. Wilson, and she was buried in Prahran. Two others followed her, and the location of their graves is said to be somewhere in the vicinity of Woodside Crescent, Toorak.

The settlement of Prahran, from Gardiner's Creek to Wellington Street, grew in the early fifties with surprising rapidity. It must be borne in mind that the advance of Prahran marched with the progress of Melbourne. The population of Victoria in 1852 was 97,000; the gold discoveries caused an increase of 168,000; and in 1853 those numbers were further added to by an additional 54,000. This vast influx of people created most pressing demands for many things, including houses, beef, mutton and vegetables. The beef and mutton were supplied by the squatters, and those on the Dandenong Road used the stock roads through Prahran. Windsor, called on old titles the “Township of Windsor,” as has been shown, affected to regard Prahran as a swamp. In the natural state of the country, Windsor appeared as superior high land, and more suitable for building purposes. The settlement there, too, was on a main stock route. The early speculators without doubt believed that the village or town would commence at this spot, and they regarded the south and St. Kilda sides of Wellington Street as the best sites, for they paid more for them. Their idea was that Wellington Street would lead into a town of shops at the Junction. It may be remembered that the highest priced land at the Crown lands sale was at the north-east corner of Wellington Street, S. Staughton's block of 10 acres, for which he paid £28/10/- an acre.

The traders, amongst them were John Mitchell, Thomas Izod, Dunlop and Edwards, Adam Smith, Wally Miller, White, and others, at the Commercial Road end of Chapel Street, were quite as keen in capturing the trade incidental to travelling stock and station supplies as those of Windsor. In the name of their road, Commercial Road—the road of commerce—they endeavoured to convey an advertisement of the vicinity of marts and stores. Commercial Road was to have been the principal trade avenue of the city, but to foresee the vagaries of trade and population is a task **beyond** most men. Charles Street is reputed to have been the first business street in Prahran, until eclipsed by Commercial Road, to be in its turn left behind by Chapel Street. James Mason made a bid for the pride of the place. Possibly on the wisdom contained in the advice, "Divide and conquer," he placed the Royal George Hotel, and arranged the site for the Mechanics' Institute between the two contending sections—Windsor and Commercial Road. It is said the first house on the Royal George corner was a small humpy that was afterwards enlarged, and became a grog shanty, under the title of "Rob Roy Inn." The owner did so well that it was he who laid the foundations for a much more substantial hotel. Then his affairs went wrong, and the land came, with the foundations of his projected hotel, into the market. Whether Mason was conscious of any racial humour in placing the Royal George Hotel upon the foundations of the "Rob Roy Inn" has not transpired.

When James Mason "arranged" to have the Mechanics' Institute next to his hotel, the "Royal George," it was said he had an eye to his bar receipts. By all the rules of the game, Mechanics' Institutes are, in settlements like early Prahran, specially so at their inception, the pivot about which public parochial business moves. The wise greybeards meet there, a more or less stream of villagers flows thither, and naturally where men congregate custom is so stimulated by shops. The Mechanics, therefore, was a fairly safe proposition to foretell as the hub of the place. More than that, there was the advantage of close proximity to Middle Dandenong Road (High Street), along which stock also travelled. When drivers came to the turn of "the road," at the north-east corner of Chapel Street, they found a securely fenced stockyard wherein to place their fat sheep and bullocks. Man and beast were alike well catered for by the first hotelkeepers. Chapel Road was not much more than a bush track, with a hut here and there, with hundreds of gum trees verging on its boundaries, an occasional paddock fenced in, and also open spaces. The Central Road Board, administered from Melbourne, did not worry about Prahran roads, though sometimes the conditions were so bad that they had to make a show of doing something. For example, we find an early sop to purchasers of Crown lands, in an advertisement of this nature, May 10, 1850: "David Lennox, by order of His Honor the Superintendent, Bridge Officer, Melbourne, calls for tenders from parties willing to contract for repairing the road across the swamp opposite Mrs. Hobson's,

South Yarra." That road was Gardiner's Creek Road, just below where Hawksburn is now. The swampy ground in Chapel Street, at Commercial Road, was of more importance, but it was not on the high road to the rich settlers at Toorak. The section next to Mrs. Hobson had been bought from Balbirnie by the Hon. James Horatio Nelson Cassell, who was of H.M. Customs. He died at the age of 39, and his widow continued to live in their old dwelling, which was called "Hawksburn House." The Cassells were the authors of "Hawks-burn," their house being close to the great gully that, at its mouth, drained into the swamp at the foot of Chapel Street. The main drain of Prahran now follows the bed of the old water course. Upon the day the pair determined on the site for their home they observed a hawk sitting on the side of the gully, wherein a stream flowed, or what the Cassells in their Scottish mode of expression termed a "burn." They saw something of *avium garritus*, or bird talk, in this circumstance, and took it as an augury that their house should be called "Hawksburn House," and so the name, in its turn, passed on to the locality. Its district neighbour—Toorak—is not so felicitous in its appropriateness to the place described. To Hoddle, a native name was what he wanted, and the drawback that it did not fit the occasion was not considered. Had Toorak been described in the aboriginal tongue as the rising ground, we would welcome the rhyme, if any, and commend the reason. Alas! that it is so; Toorak signifies a reedy swamp! The word, as pronounced by the natives, was "Tarook," or "Taarak." A lake



near Mortlake is called “Torrak,” a name legacy from the aboriginal, and of course, with reason on its side.

The land in Chapel Street took a rise at about where James’s Place is, and continued until it fell away in undulations at Oxford Street. At this spot, when it was first made, Chapel Street ran through a cutting with embankments on each side, twelve feet high. Lester and Terry built a malt house and brewery, which now forms a portion of the jam factory. For the purposes of their building, they cut away the hill until they could place their basement on a level with Chapel Street. Where the Baptist Church is built the land was about 10 feet high from the level of Chapel Street, and three wattle and dab huts were erected on the bank. Passing along, and crossing Gardiner’s Creek Road, in those days, when the river was reached, Chapel Street came to a dead end. The hill that was afterwards known, one half as “Forest Hill,” the other half as “The Terrace,” was an effectual “halt” to any stream of traffic in that direction. While the road to Richmond was barred by this barrier hill, no advantageous reason existed why traffic should flow by Commercial Road. Past the marts in that thoroughfare, called the Lower Dandenong Road, the connection between the beeves of Dandenong (the “big hill”) and trade is shown by the name, the route was clear to St. Kilda Road, the great south artery for stock purposes. When the Chapel Street ferry was decided upon, and a passage way to the river was blasted, the first steps were taken that led to us having Chapel Street as it exists to-day. A punt, as a rule, is succeeded by a bridge, specially so in a young

place with growing numbers and a strong yearning for progression. In due season the bridge came. The cutting to the river was enlarged, the spirit of the hill taking as toll one workman's life, a mass of rock falling and crushing him to death. The defile formed a suitable and favourite ambush for footpads. During the depressions that followed the days of wild mining and land boom speculations, there were desperate and dangerous characters abroad, who made this place, at night, a favourite spot for garotting and robbing their victims.

James Mason's action in erecting the George Hotel served as a link between Windsor and Commercial Road, and the gradually increasing number of houses between them formed a chain that has since been completed. "The Village of Pasley" was another attempt to centralise what advantages might lie in the hereafter, when advanced developments took place. The pioneers had great faith in Prahran's future, and the interests of land owners were, to make, if possible, their particular allotments the heart of the place. In loose talk, Windsor is described as having been known as "Pasley," or "Paisley," and Prahran itself has even so been incorrectly designated. The village of Pasley, or, as it appears in a plan, "Paisley," possessed by the Council, and which way of spelling the name gave colour to the argument that it was christened after the famous town on the North Coast, Renfrewshire, but that contention must be rejected in favour of Captain Pasley, the then chairman of the Central Road Board, was a portion of Crown Block 56, bought by Glass and Payne. It extended from High Street to James Street, in a line

with Chapel and Hornby Streets, and was evidently purchased from Glass and Payne by John Turnbull, who divided the block with the following streets: Victoria, Albert (subsequently changed to Earl), Duke and James. Hornby Street was then known as Wellington Street, one William Johnson is shown as owning a small allotment facing Chapel Street. Primrose and Lincoln Streets were evidently later subdivisions. The name "Paisley" appeared on some of the old title deeds of property within the area described. Some years ago an envelope was exhibited in the Prahran Library by the late Joseph Crook, with the inscription, "Mr. Joseph Crook, Junr., Painter and Paperhanger, Pasling, South Melbourne."

Nowadays such nomenclature is used for the purposes of utility to distinguish sub-divisional estates, so we are inclined to think that more importance has been attached to this "Pasley village" than ever it merited. Some years ago, a Mayor of Prahran, Cr. G. W. Taylor, attempted to affix the name of Highbury after his native place, Highbury Barn, upon a portion of East Prahran, but he was unsuccessful in his full desire, though Highbury Grove remains. An ex-councillor, George Knipe, who had a chequered municipal career, was more fortunate in pleasing the tastes of the community. In September, 1871, he advertised "130 village and cottage allotments in the new and delightful locality in future to be known as 'College Lawn,' situated between St. Kilda Road and Prahran Railway Station, known as Donald's paddock."

“College Lawn” has remained, but Knipe was not speaking by the card when he described the locality as new and delightful. A Lancashire man, William Atkinson, erected the first house there about 1850. In that year a number of tents, succeeded by some buildings brought out from England, were built in a line with Greville Street of to-day, though Greville Street then, as a street, ceased in a blind end, at about where the railway station is now. That was T. B. Payne’s sub-division; the boundary line of his Crown section pulled him up against W. Highett’s purchase of section 40. Payne’s original plan of sub-division, drawn in with ink, is still in existence in Solicitor Vail and Son’s office, with “Marion Place” written along the road. The residents who first took up their abode in Donald’s paddock, in the places referred to, were some emigrants by the ship “Statesman,” and the place was known in consequence as “Statesman’s Row.” Some years afterwards, a Captain Sewell purchased half of the Punt Road frontage of Donald’s paddock, and decided to speculate on a somewhat extensive scale. He imported materials and workmen from Singapore to erect the houses, but the venture proved a failure. Most of the dwellings were cleared away, though one with teak doors was standing in 1897. On the other half of the frontage some buildings brought in pieces from Tasmania were erected. A rainbow line was painted around them, to facilitate the work of reconstruction. They consisted of two rooms, and brought in the early fifties £5 a month rent, paid in advance. Where these houses once stood is now covered with handsome villas.

Punt Road was originally called Hoddle Street, after the surveyor, Hoddle, and was so named by Governor Bourke, but for purposes of distinction from Hoddle Street, Richmond, "Punt Road," christened after the punt at the foot of Punt Hill, has been found more useful. The commemorative virtues of the names of streets is often very significant of the times moving when they came into existence. Specially so is this phase of street naming in evidence at Windsor. The glories of the Peninsular War were fresh in the fifties, and more so since the "Iron Duke" did not pass away until September 14, 1852, dying peacefully in his armchair at Walmer. Britain's dangers had quickened the sense of loyalty, and the popularity of young Queen Victoria and her Consort, "Albert the Good," were reflected in and about Windsor, which is rich in names of historical relation, so obvious when the time and sources from which they spring are indicated as to render any more precise reference unnecessary.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SPECTEMUR AGENDO—THE £5,000 SUBSIDY—AUT CAESAR, AUT NULLUS—THE COUNCIL TRIUMPHANT—SOUTH PARK RESERVE—A VIGOROUS PROTEST—CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE BENCH—PRAHRAN IN BEING.

ON June 7, 1856, the Council instructed its Finance Committee to procure a seal for "this corporation, and to apply to the Government for a motto for the same in accordance with the Municipal Act." From this resolution it seems as if the Government carried on a wholesale business in mottoes. If all the municipalities incorporated about this time clamoured for mottoes, there must have been a great demand upon the classical attainments of those Civil servants who had, in their youth, like Gay's Squire, been "lashed into Latin by the tingling rod." The "motto pigeonhole" may have been exhausted, or the official brains bankrupt, for the Government declined the task, leaving it to the Council. On June 14, the Finance Committee are further requested to prepare a device and a motto "for the seal of the city." The result of the Finance Committee's deliberations and delving into old tomes was a recommendation which was subsequently accepted and ratified by Administrator Major-General Edward Macarthur. The design selected was the Royal Arms, with an encircling scroll, containing the words "Borough of Prahran," and the motto, "*Spectemur Agendo*," meaning, "Let us be seen by our deeds."

We are unable to mention the learned councillor to whom the credit belongs of submitting the motto, so we are, perforce, to regard the motto, as indeed it was, a corporate selection and an unanimous decision. Mr. John Craven, the Town Clerk, in neat writing, records the dry fact. The motto, as first written in the minute book, is a little rocky in its spelling. But what of that? The first Council knew enough to spell its way through its difficulties, as presently we shall see, and it had quite as great a sense of public dignity as a Roman patrician, even if some of the Councillors could not lisp the numbers in the Latin tongue. The motto bears the evidence of the mental attitude of the Councillors, while at the same time arresting the judgment of any carping critics who then, as now, made and make Councils whipping-blocks on which to whittle their wits. The motto was appropriate to the situation wherein the Councillors were placed, that of laying the foundations upon which to build the fabric of a great city. We can imagine these first councillors, animated with the spirit of Ruskin, as he writes in his "Lamp of Memory," "Let it be such a work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say, as they look upon the labour and wrought substances of them, 'See! this our fathers did for us.'"

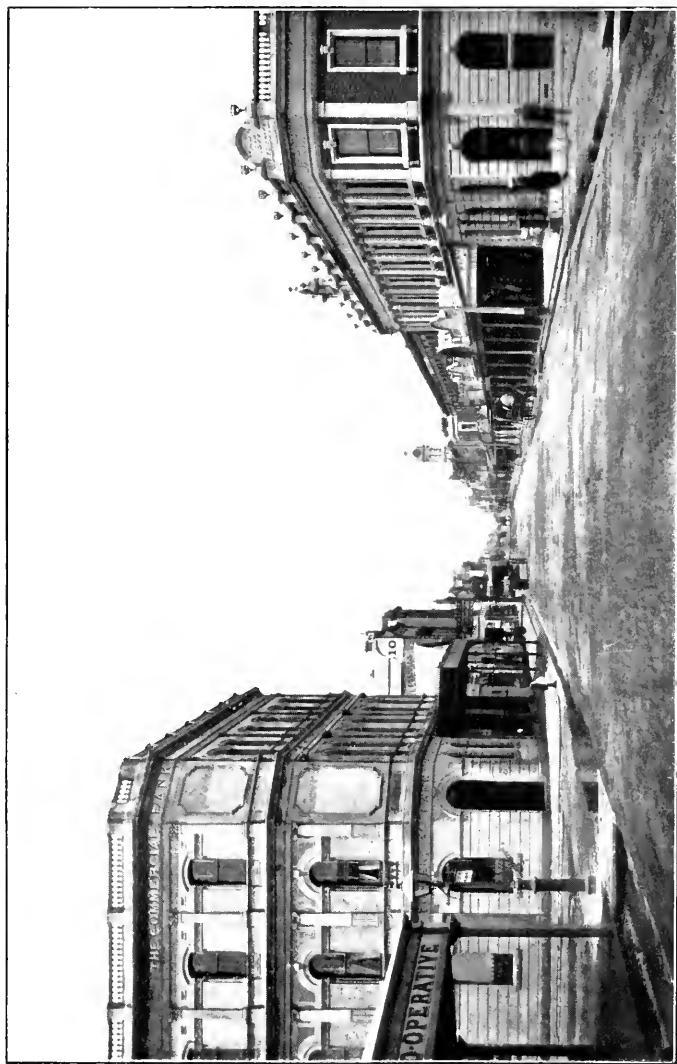
And truly, in this year of grace, our King Lord's Coronation year, we can say as we look in astonishment, and in turn to each of the four points of

the compass in Prahran—the Council is seen by its deeds!

The motto, "*Spectemur Agendo*," has, like all other things, its life history. Indirectly its currency is due to the fact that King John, perhaps anticipating the Magna Charta pill he had to swallow at Runnimeade, had a terrible dream, which waxed sore and troubled him. As an effort to set at rest the disturbed spirits within, he founded a Cistercian Abbey, in 1204, at Bellus Locus, or "fair place," to become known afterwards as Beaulieu, pronounced Bewley, a village in Hampshire, rich in recollections as the sanctuary of Ann Neville, Countess of Warwick, after her husband, "The Kingmaker," had been slain at the Battle of Barnet, in 1471. Five hundred and fifty-eight years after the founding of the Abbey, Edward Hussey, apparently on the occasion of his marriage to Isabella, Duchess dowager of Manchester, was created Baron Beaulieu, of Beaulieu. The title is now extinct. Possibly the bold baron thought of the good monks that once tenanted the Cistercian Abbey, and who asked, "Let us be seen by our deeds," for he selected the motto, "*Spectemur Agendo*," the abbey house motto of the dead monks, though not the lines of St. Bernard, which Wordsworth has translated as the motto belonging to the whole order of the Cistercian fraternity.

The patrician spirit was soon manifested by the Council when an attempt was made to assail its independence as a corporate body. The position the councillors took up was *Aut Caesar, aut nullus*. The Government subsidy was the gauge of contention. From





CHAPEL STREET, LOOKING SOUTH FROM COMMERCIAL ROAD

*In the Early Eighties*



the first, the sum of £5,000 had been set ringing in the ears of Prahran. Goodman, on public platform, had denounced the subsidy as a delusion and a snare, designed to lure the settlers to suffer the smart of heavy taxation. It was to be the first subsidy and the last. Snodgrass, it may be remembered, combated such statements with the assurance that not only was £5,000 available, but there was £10,000 to follow. The £5,000 had appeared upon the Government Appropriation Bill, earmarked for Prahran as a municipal subsidy. The Chief Secretary had said that he was "pleased to acknowledge that the municipal district of Prahran had equal claims with the districts of Richmond and Emerald Hill, for which places sums for a similar purpose had been placed on the estimates." That statement appeared promising and aboveboard, but fair words proverbially butter no parsnips, and the Council found that was so, for when it went to collect the subsidy, its members discovered they could not obtain possession of the money. Notwithstanding that the Government had benefited to the extent of £24,000 by the Crown land sales of Prahran, the Treasurer exercised a Shylock-like grip on the ducats that were Prahran's right by virtue of the appropriation vote. Several applications were made for the money, for the young corporation was desperately in need of ways and means. The municipal authorities were without revenue, for no rate had been struck. Somewhat akin to the parlous condition of a poor man seeking the crumbs from a rich man's table, the Prahran Council appeared to the Haines Ministry as a public body whose poverty, if not its will,

would consent to dictation. But if the Council was as poor as Job it certainly was not so patient, and as to dictation, well, the "big fellows" soon learned that the men of the swamps were something more than mere platform swashbucklers. Pressed to a definite issue, the Government was at last compelled to disclose its hand, and the hand, when seen, was still that of Shylock, while the proffered "gift" at once waxed poor by untenable conditions. The Treasurer, the Hon. Charles Sladen, wrote the Council (April 11, 1856), that "the Government were prepared, on being satisfied that steps had been taken to levy a rate for 1856 of at least one shilling in the pound, and upon the production of a certificate by the chairman that one-half such rate had actually been received, to pay one-half the amount voted to the Municipal Town of Prahran immediately thereupon." Upon the receipt of this letter, the indignation of the councillors was not confined within the limits of the municipal boundaries. A lioness bereft of her whelps, or a mother of her child, could not have struck quicker or made more outcry than did the councillors. Cr. Crews immediately moved that a meeting of the townspeople be called to consider this outrage upon the feelings and dignity of their chosen representatives. The public uproar may doubtless have proved thunderous enough, but it was questionable whether the verbal bolts would have disturbed the Ministry, while the £5,000 remained with the Treasurer. Cr. Crew's motion was withdrawn, and the following resolutions were adopted as better

answering the purpose in view. They were moved by Cr. Snodgrass and seconded by Cr. Mason:—

“1. That this Council do place upon record their unqualified disapprobation of the uncalled for and unconstitutional attempt upon the part of the Executive Government to interfere with the self-government of this Municipal District, by dictating, in the terms of the Hon. the Treasurer's letter to this Council, the rate that must be laid upon property in this district before the amount of £5,000, voted by the Legislative Council in their last session, should be made available for the benefit of this district.

“2. That this Council feels called upon in contradiction to a statement contained in letter of the Hon. Treasurer, of the 11th inst., to assert that the vote of £5,000 to the Prahran Municipal District was agreed to by the Legislative Council without any condition whatever, as will be seen by a reference to the estimate of Expenditure and Appropriation Act for the year 1856, and that this Council are of opinion that the enforcement of any condition to a vote of the Legislative Council under such circumstances is a departure from the honest and legal discharge of the functions of the Executive.

“3. That this Council do wait upon the Chief Secretary and submit for his consideration the above resolution, and at the same time intimate to that officer that in the event of the terms dictated to this Council by the letter of the Hon. the Treasurer being insisted upon, that this Council cannot any longer, either with credit to themselves or to the interests of the Prahran Municipality, continue to be placed in a position which must be denounced as both absurd and unprofitable.”

*Aut Caesar, aut nullus*, indeed! *Spectemur Agendo*, in truth! And, further, the Council decided to cease municipal business until the dispute was settled! These town Cromwells and Hampdens meant to win, or, failing, to let chaos reign. They had fought hard for the palladium of home government, yet on the threshold of the consummation of their hopes, it was proposed to fetter, yoke, and chain them like galley slaves. Cr. Snodgrass was a member of the Legislative Assembly, and it may be judged from his attitude in the Claud Farie case that he was well versed in constitutional law and procedure. He launched in Council the motions,

and his must have been the master brain that planned the Council's line of attack. He knew that the action of the Executive in imposing conditions upon the payment of the subsidy was *ultra vires* after it had been unconditionally passed by the Legislature. The members of the Executive found on their part that, instead of frightening a rabbit out of its hole, they had drawn a badger. They climbed down at once, sooner than have the irate councillors shoot in their resignations, to be followed by troublous debate in Parliament upon the Ministry's high-handed interference and attempted usurpation of the rights conferred upon local bodies as to their municipal self-government. In short, when seen they promised, with courtesy and smiles, an "early payment of the vote of £5,000," so the men of Prahran pocketed their resignations and returned triumphant to their labours. Whether it was the effect of this bloodless victory, the Council was not in the mood for any hostile criticism, for soon afterwards it passed a resolution to the effect that it considered it "an evidence of great disrespect on the part of the ratepayers to call meetings on their own" (criticising the Council), "and that for the future any communications from such meetings, held without the consent of the Council, would not be recognised." These early men were not to be dictated to! Again, *Aut Caesar, aut nullus!*

That the ratepayers resented such imperious ways is equally certain, for at a meeting held by them some hard things were said about the chairman, Cr. Sargood. The councillors were annoyed, for the corporate honour of the Council was involved in the slander. By way

of a counterblast to the platform denunciations of the ratepayers, the councillors, on July 26, 1856, presented an address to their chairman, and had a copy of the same duly inscribed upon the minute book:—

To F. J. Sargood, Esq.,

Chairman of the Municipal Council of Prahran.

Sir,—In consequence of some remarks having been made in public that you were totally unfit for the honourable position which you at present occupy as Chairman of the Municipal Council of Prahran, and Magistrate of the District, we, the undersigned members of the said Council do hereby avail ourselves of this earliest opportunity of expressing our entire confidence in your ability, zeal and integrity in carrying out the wishes of the Council, and your earnest desire at all times to forward the general interests of the locality.

James Mason, Andrew Izett, J. B. Crews, Wm. Oliver, Wm. Robinson Pye.

The motion to place the address in the minute book was opposed by Cr. Snodgrass. A heated scene took place. Cr. Mason called upon the Town Clerk to take down the following words, made use of by Cr. Snodgrass, “asserted with such a blot upon the chairman’s character.” And there the words stand to-day in evidence of the folly of Cr. Mason in placing on record the temporary spleen of an angered man, in the person of Peter Snodgrass, son of Colonel Snodgrass, once Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen’s Land. In 1858, Sargood was honoured by Prahran with a presentation portrait, which to-day hangs in the Town Hall as a testimony of his work and services to the infant municipality.

Nature was in a wilful mood when she fashioned the spot men call Prahran. Natural difficulties were found, through which the early city fathers had to rough-hew their way, to leave as a legacy to their successors the task

of placing the coping stones on their work, to be followed by the polishing to completion that has taken, and is now taking place. But in one way Nature had her will, though in some respects the wonderful all-conquering human hand, guided by man's brain, has modified even that. Nature in the first instance plotted the Northern boundary line of Prahran. Riverways frequently form the municipal boundaries, and that has been so in part with Prahran— $37^{\circ} 51'$  S. Lat.,  $145^{\circ} 1'$  E. Long.—the Northern boundary being the Yarra. In a physical and geological sense the warrant proclaiming the Yarra a boundary is untainted. In pre-Adamite days Nature, in advance, settled the problem by a great upheaval of volcanoes at Clifton Hill and Collingwood. The sites of these burnt-out craters are fairly well located by geologists. The liquid lava the volcanoes vomited became, when cold, basalt or bluestone. The flow of the basalt, which was of the consistency of porridge, sought the lowest levels, and found such levels in the northern skirts of South Yarra and Toorak. When there the basaltic flow was arrested by a wall of silurian rock, such as forms the cliffs at Heyington and the hills at South Yarra. Afterwards the land drainage followed the flow of basalt, the water likewise seeking the lowest level, and so the Yarra was formed. The river remains to-day an everflowing line, showing the basalt run. The twists, bends, and turns of the river at the foot of Williams Road illustrate this in a most striking and interesting manner. What now forms the river cliffs, as stated, arrested the flow of basalt lava, and that is the



reason why no bluestone is found in its natural state, waiting to be quarried, south of the Yarra.

This incidence of Nature's work fashioned the fortunes and industries of Prahran in the early fifties, inasmuch as its residents found the clay to enable them to profitably produce bricks. They were not interfered with by trade competition on the part of their Richmond neighbours, as the latter did not, at that date, burn many bricks, because there was a constant market for their bluestone.

The geological formation of the south bank of the Yarra (and extending half-way to Toorak Road), is silurian, and this formation goes as far as Toorak Road itself on the east and west extremities of the city. Another smaller outlier of silurian rock occurs at the south-east corner of the city, while the remainder of Prahran consists of tertiary rocks of older and newer pliocene age, capped with post pliocene sand, clay and gravel. The science of petrology regards the outcrops of silurian rocks as having at one time been covered with shallow seas, and remembering the vicinity of Prahran to the present line of sea coast, and the nature of the fossils found in Prahran, such a supposition is based on scientific reasoning. A large portion of Prahran is, as stated, covered with tertiary sands and gravel, underlying which is a ferruginous sandstone, with many fossils and moulds. The following are some of the groups of animal remains found in this fossiliferous sandstone:—

Corals, sea-mats (*polyzoa*), lamp-shells (*brachipoda*), bivalves, univalves (*gasteropoda*), tusk-shells (*scaphopoda*), and remains of crabs (*crustacea*).

These fossils have been discovered chiefly in excavations made by the cutting for the railway at South Yarra, and the various sewerage works in Prahran and Windsor, notably in an area around Great Davis Street and Powell Street. From the latter locality Mr. F. P. Spry has collected a large number of specimens, which are in the National Museum collection.

The silurian bed-rock in the vicinity of Hoyte's paddock, and the surrounding area embraced by the Yarra Improvement Works, contains some interesting fossil remains, referable to the groups of the corals, graptolites, crinoids, star-fishes, brittle-stars, worms, lampshells, bivalves, univalves, pteropods (sea-butterflies), cephalopods, crustacea (trilobites, barnacles, pod-shrimps and sea-scorpions).

In connection with the bivalves found in a fossilised state, a species of the pearl-mussel (*margaritana margaritifera*) was frequent in the swamps of Prahran adjoining the Yarra. As late as 1870 the pearl mussel was still in existence in the now much diminished swamp at the foot of Williams Road, known in its fullness as Lake Como. On September 3, 1870, the *Telegraph* newspaper states in its news columns: "Pearls have been found in some mussels recently taken out of a lagoon running off the Yarra, near Toorak. They are of little or no commercial value, being of a bad colour, and not larger in size than No. 6 shot. Still, it is possible that where small ones were found there may be larger, though we should scarcely recommend anyone on such a slender chance to enter on the pursuit with a view to profit."

Some doubtful fossil remains have been picked out of the silurian grey mudstone in Gardiner's Creek, but they are little more than concretions in their present state.

We do not suppose that the first Prahran Council knew aught of such natural phenomena, or cared about the fossils in the ferruginous sandstone, nor had its members any quarrel with Nature outside her prodigal gifts of swamps. But the Councillors did feel at that time that the question of the extension of the boundaries when Crown Reserves were in danger was an important one. The Brighton Road, formerly known as Great Arthur's Seat Road, and now called St. Kilda Road, formed the western boundary of a large block of land described as the South Park Reserve. This land was in the possession of the Crown, and is, what remains to-day, called Fawkner Park. No improvements had been effected upon it, even a surrounding fence being lacking. The Council frequently urged upon the Commissioners of Land and Works to do something to render the reserve of some value, but in vain. At last, tired of the Commissioners and sick of seeing the land a wilderness, and fearing the worst, the Council, on June 6, 1857, passed a resolution to petition His Excellency the Governor to extend the municipal boundary, such extension to commence from the south-west corner of the present boundary (the St. Kilda Junction), and proceed in a line with the main Brighton Road to its junction with the Gardiner's Creek Road, to the centre of the Punt Road, thence by a line bearing due north to the River Yarra Yarra. No doubt in due course the

Council received a diplomatic reply, but so far as hearing their petition to any profitable purpose, the Governor and his advisers were as deaf to the prayers of the Prahran Council as the gods of Baal were to the cries of their priests. Though doomed to failure, the attempt was, within its limits, an outcome of a masterly view of the possibilities of the future. The reckless way in which Crown lands had been alienated was worse than a crime; it was a mistake that has not been retrieved to this day. Even examples of the suicidal policies of purblind Governments may be found within Prahran at Toorak and Heyington (which derived its name from "Heyington House"), where river frontage rights have been forfeited. Within the Parish of Prahran, at Elsternwick, sea shore rights, all by national heritage the property of the people, have been also ruthlessly disposed of at first Crown lands sales.

In view of such Government cupidity, and with a desire, so far as the South Park Reserve was concerned, to remove a source of temptation, the Prahran Council took its action. That the Council was justified in fearing the worst was made manifest by a report submitted to the Council on February 7, 1859, when the chairman, John Cunningham, reported that Crs. Crews, Palmer, and Thompson, accompanied by several townspeople, waited on the President of the Board of Land and Works respecting the sale of the reserve bounded by Gardiner's Creek and Brighton Roads. The deputation urged its strenuous objection to the sale of the Crown lands, but Charles Gavan Duffy, the President, and a member of the O'Shanassy Ministry, would scarcely

listen to the Council. He expressed his determination to sell the land in accordance with the plan forwarded to the Council. Dismayed, but not disheartened, the Council shot every bolt it possessed, and strained every nerve to quash the contemplated sale. A petition was presented to the Legislative Council, the St. Kilda Council was asked to co-operate, His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., was prayed to interfere, and Cr. Crews, in his capacity as member for St. Kilda electorate, embracing Prahran, brought the Council's protest before the House. Notwithstanding all this, Duffy carried out his threat, and sold the land. It comprises those lots on St. Kilda Road, where the houses have their back fences abutting upon Fawkner Park. The sale of this land, in spite of all protests, was a gross act of political vandalism, from which the aesthetic taste of more enlightened days recoils with revulsion. The people's birthright was parted with for a mess of pottage. The frontage of a park that should, and would, have enhanced the beauty of a Melbourne boulevard was sacrificed on the altar of Mammon, to the lasting shame of the O'Shanassy Ministry and Charles Gavan Duffy's departmental administration. The spirited protest of the Prahran Councillors, however, shines refulgent through the veil of years. In this act they showed themselves ahead of their generation. They anticipated the knowledge we possess to-day of the value and the beauty of parks and gardens. They were insistent upon what should be the unalienable rights of the people whose representatives they were.

The necessary administrative machinery of a town was in full swing in 1857. Besides the Council and the Central Road Board, the legal side of the community was well attended to. The Prahran Court met for business at the Court House at the corner of Chapel and Greville Streets, on Mondays and Thursdays, at 9 a.m. Mr. F. J. Sargood, M.L.A., as chairman of the Council, was chairman of the Bench. This privilege, or right, has extended to the present day, and it owes its inception in Prahran to a well-defined action on the part of the Council. In 1859 an attempt was made by the honorary justices to select their own chairman. They held a meeting on March 21 of the same year for that purpose. The Council took alarm at the justices' intention, and a motion was moved by Cr. Crews, seconded by Cr. Thompson—

“That this Council consider their chairman should take his seat as chairman of the Petty Sessions held in this municipality as a right conceded at the commencement of the same, and any infringement of that practice will be looked upon as a blow aimed at representative institutions, and an insult to the Council.”

The motion, which was carried unanimously, had the desired effect, though in later years it has in practice been modified, partly as a convenience to the Mayor, and partly as an acknowledgment of the services of the honorary magistracy, to the custom that now obtains, viz., that the Mayor occupies the Bench as chairman on Thursdays, and the chairman of the justices adjudicates on Mondays. The Clerk of Courts was H. Crofton, and the police officer Sergeant Dowling. This Sergeant Dowling remained in Prahran for some years, and is referred to as the first police officer, as he was, of the Council. When he left, in March, 1866, his popularity

was recognised by the presentation of a public address. Amongst his men were Constables Rodgers, Dunn, May and Siske. Dowling was not, however, the first police officer in Prahran. Shortly after the Council was incorporated the Commissioner of Police wrote to it, stating he had instructed Sergeant Reid to report to the Town Clerk any nuisances he saw about Prahran, the said nuisances being dead animals left to poison the air. For a half-year in 1858 the Council paid £11 for burying animals. But serious offences against the laws were unknown. The wood-carter who neglected to have his name properly painted on his dray shared with the occasional drunk the principal attention of the Bench. In connection with the wood-carters, a story is handed down in Prahran Police Court annals to the effect that a many-times-tried offender was before the Court once again. The constable swore that there was no name on the dray, when the following verbal exchange took place:—

Defendant: "Do you swear there was no name on the dray?"

Constable: "Yes, I do! The name was obliterated."

Defendant: "You are a liar! The name was O'Callaghan!"

At South Yarra, Dr. J. Coates was the Government Vaccinator, and E. B. Taylor acted as Deputy-Registrar; at Prahran, Dr. Job Phillips was Government Vaccinator, and John Tulloch Deputy-Registrar. Dr. Phillips was one of the first, if not the pioneer doctor in Prahran. He started practice in a green baize tent in Commercial Road in the fifties, his night lights being candles stuck

in empty bottles, used as candlesticks. Other early medical men were Dr. William Stokes, who was known as "The Silent Doctor," and Dr. Edward Hall. Hall was greatly beloved by the first settlers for his services, and he often gave money to his poorer patients. He stood about 6ft. 3in. in his stockings, and carried his head always a little to one side. His house contained one room, in which he lived, and another he dignified by the title of "surgery."

The churches that called the faithful to prayer were the Anglican, Prahran, Rev. J. H. Gregory; South Yarra, Rev. W. W. Guinness; Roman Catholic adherents were shepherded by the Rev. Father P. Niall, who acted for some years. The free Presbyterian Church, Punt Road, South Yarra, was in charge of the Rev. George Divorty. He was made the butt of an insensate joke, for he complained to the *Argus* that, in answer to an advertisement, a number of men, carpenters and gardeners, had been induced to tramp from Melbourne to his house, on the plea that he required them. He thought that whosoever put in the advertisement should be made to suffer for the loss of time the poor misled men had incurred. The Rev. William Moss, the first Minister in Prahran, was at the Independent Chapel, in Chapel Street, South Yarra. A Baptist Church, in Brewer Street, had for a pastor the Rev. B. Lemon, while that in Chapel Street was in charge of Mr. J. Wilson. Two friendly and benefit societies were in full swing, viz., the A.I.O.O., Prince Albert Lodge, its meeting place being at Merritt's Prince Albert Hotel, Chapel Street; the M.U.I.O.O.F., Good Intent Lodge, at the Royal George Hotel. The South Yarra Cricket



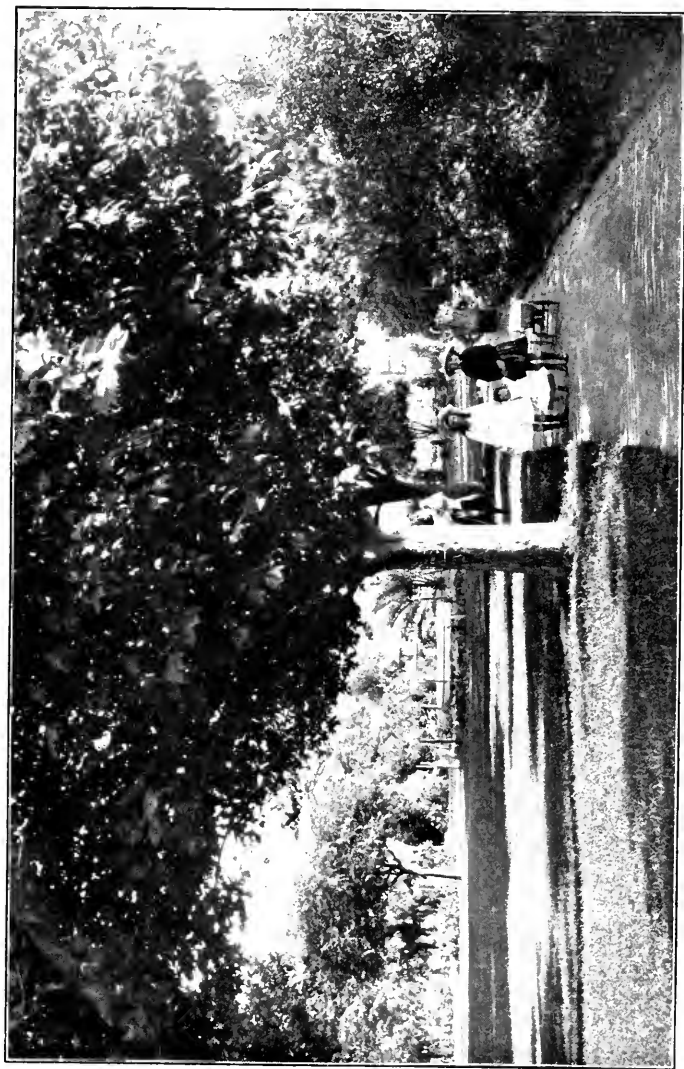
Club held the premier position as a sporting institution, with the Hon. T. H. Fellows, M.L.A., as President; Vice-President, S. Heape; Treasurer, J. Flaxman; Sec., J. Gaunt. The Club's meeting place was near the junction of Gardiner's Creek and Punt Roads. The Prahran Mechanics' Institute had at this date as its President, Captain H. C. Pasley, R.E.; Trustees, G. W. Rusden, F. J. Sargood, M.L.A., and Dr. Stokes; Treasurer, S. Ruddick; Secretaries, S. Webb and E. Nixon.

The medical men were a numerous body for so small a community. They were Michael Barry, L.R.C.P.S., Gardiner's Creek Road; Major Charles Dukes, M.R.C.S., England, L.A.C.L. (he was the first health officer of Prahran, and he lived in a small red brick cottage in Duke Street); W. Lucas, M.R.C.S., Eng., L.A.C.L., South Yarra; Arthur O'Mullane (no descriptive degrees were lodged by Dr. O'Mullane with the Medical Board); Job Phillips, M.R.C.S., Edin., South Yarra; and Wm. Thompson, M.R.C.S., Edin., South Yarra. Dr. Thompson, who came out to the colony as doctor to an immigrant ship, was a well-known author amongst Shakespearian students as having written an erudite, and eloquent, treatise to prove that James I.'s philosophical Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon, wrote the plays attributed to the man from Stratford, William Shakespeare. He was also an early authority upon typhoid, and entered a vigorous campaign against what to-day appears almost incredible, viz., the wholesale ploughing in of nightsoil in the paddocks of Fawkner Park. Dr. Thompson traced a very definite history between the

insanitary disposal of such refuse and the frequency of typhoid fever. Such a disgusting practice, to the great annoyance and danger to the health of the residents of South Yarra, was in existence until the early seventies.

On June 14, 1858, it was officially announced that "Prahran was deemed to be within the limits of the city in which the General Post Office is situated, and that all letters to it carry the town rate of postage, viz., 2d. per single half-ounce." The Post Office was at first in Commercial Road, and formed a portion of a shop kept by A. F. White, a chemist. The Prahran mail closed daily in Melbourne at 9 a.m., and arrived at Prahran at 10 a.m.; it left Prahran daily at 3 p.m., and arrived in Melbourne half an hour later. Prior to that the mails were delivered from the Post Office, Melbourne, and the first two postmen who daily tramped in and out of Melbourne along the bush tracks of Prahran were Thomas Brain and Edward Glass. Brain lived in Osborne Street, South Yarra, and Edward Glass resided in a cottage over the Chapel Street bridge. His early morning walks to Melbourne evidently agreed with him, for he lived to be over the great age of 92 years. A well-known Mercury in another respect was newspaper-man Donne, who had a little shop at the corner of Park and Domain Roads. He supplied the early settlers with the papers of the day.

In 1853-4, the means of transport to Melbourne were very haphazard. A pair-horse vehicle started from the Duke of York Hotel about 8.30 a.m., leaving Melbourne on its return at five o'clock; fare, 2/6 each way. The



*"Twixt Shadow and Shine"*  
IN GREVILLE STREET GARDENS



driver went round the settlement the night before ringing a bell, calling upon intending passengers for Melbourne on the morrow to book their seats while any remained. Then a man named Phillips started a pair-horse conveyance from Toorak, and his son drove a feeder, a one-horse turnout, from the Duke of York. Father and son timed themselves to meet at the corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street, the Prahran passengers being transferred to the Toorak vehicle; fare, 1/-. In 1856, a man put upon the road a one-horse "jingle" cab, open back and front, without a cover. This cab ran into town, but at the corner of Toorak and Punt Roads it met another "jingle." If there were only two passengers, the drivers tossed a coin as to who should take them to Melbourne Town. Another alternative was to walk to the Richmond punt, and go to Melbourne down the Yarra, by one or other of the primitive steamboats, the "Gondola," or the "Victoria," for sixpence. In 1857 a regular means of conveyance had been established. Omnibuses started every quarter of an hour from the Bull and Mouth Hotel, in Bourke Street, for Prahran and Windsor. The fare was one shilling, which was increased to anything up to two-and-six after dusk. The first 'bus in the service was one owned by Ford and Scuffman, and its terminus was the Royal George. The driver was Sol Davis, one of the characters of early Prahran. Long after that a regular line of 'buses was established by George Gunn, and the cumbersome vehicles were named "Pioneer," "The Result," "The Enterprise," and "Dispatch." Afterwards the Melbourne Omnibus

Co. competed with Gunn. He continued the unequal contest until the seventies, with Gunn's red line of cabs, a red lamp by day, and a red light by night. Horse feed, wages, general up-keep, and, not least, the tolls, were too heavy a handicap at the 'bus fare of 3d., and Gunn had to retire from the contest. In the heyday of his cab service, Swanston Street, Melbourne, resounded, from five to six o'clock, with the cries of his drivers touting for passengers to "Per'in! Per'in! Per'in!" The 'buses were succeeded by the cable trams, the first car entering Prahran on October 26, 1888. The Prahran Council at first objected to the Bill that proposed to give the Tramway Company the right to run trams along Chapel Street, but soon afterwards withdrew its opposition. The Tramway Company's lease will expire on July 1, 1916, at which date the lines have to be handed over in good working condition to the Tramways' Trust, a body consisting of delegates from the metropolitan municipalities.

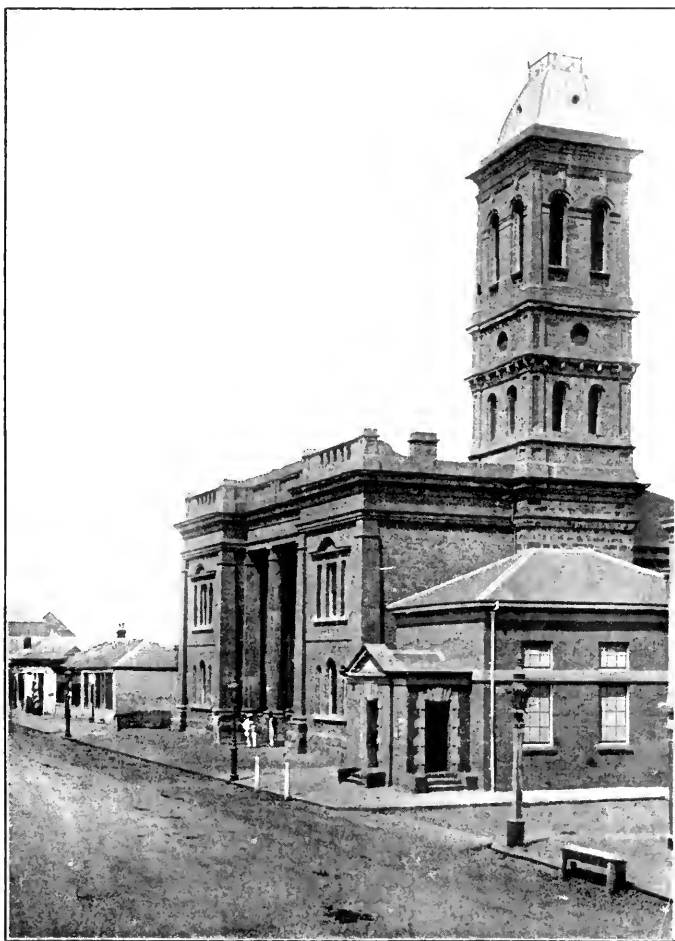
During the first years of the Council, the high tolls demanded by the Central Road Board were a subject of constant grievance with the councillors. Specially did they object, on behalf of the resident wood-carters, market gardeners, and brickmakers, to the tax of one shilling per each dray, when a gig could pass through the toll gates for sixpence. A gig, we know, has classical sanction as the acknowledged vehicle of respectability. "Thus," it has been said, "does Society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gighmen and Men." The Council wrote to the Road Board, but without any success in persuading it to reduce the toll

charges. Collection of the fees for road maintenance by the means of a turnpike gate was an accessible tax, and so favoured by the authorities. At late as 1871 there were 5,000 toll collectors in England, but such impositions were never popular with the travelling public. They even led to the Rebecca riots in 1842, which were not put down without considerable bloodshed, the motto of the rioters being Genesis xxiv. 60. The Prahran wood-carters were not riotous, and the Council could only constantly reiterate its remonstrances to the Road Board in the hope of obtaining some toll concessions. The rates the Board demanded, and that were paid, at the Chapel Street and St. Kilda toll gates are interesting, since the tax in that form is now obsolete. They were: For an ox or head of meat cattle, 1d.; horse, mare, ass or mule, 3d.; cart, dray, or such other vehicle constituted to carry goods, with two wheels, drawn by one horse or other animal, 1/-; if drawn by 2, 1/6; 3, 2/-; 4, 2/6. Waggon, wain or such other vehicle, with four wheels, drawn by one or two animals, 1/6; drawn by three, 2/-; by 4, 2/6. Cart, dray or waggon, drawn by 2 bullocks, 1/6, and 3d. each for every additional bullock. Gig, chaise or other such carriage, with two wheels, constructed to carry persons, and drawn by one horse or other animal, 6d.; 2 or more, 1/-. Coach, chariot, or other such carriage, with four wheels. 1 horse, 1/-; 2, 1/6; 2 or more, 2/-. Tolls were payable one way only for going and returning on the same day.

The early public houses that seem to have found favour with the settlers were the Myall Hotel, Balmoral Castle Hotel, Mount Erica Hotel, Prahran Hotel.

Orrong Hotel, Bush Inn, Morrow's Hotel, and Black Horse Hotel, at Windsor, Mr. Leith, licensee. Other hotels and bush drinking shanties were to be found, but the eight mentioned houses are the ones recurring most frequently on the surviving pioneers' lips. In a scattered hamlet, such as Prahran was in the early fifties, these hotels formed the common meeting ground for the residents. A remark has often been made that the early Prahranites were a very sociable community, and such was the case. They were in the habit of fore-gathering at the hotels on Saturday nights, and sometimes through the week, when they would sit in the largest room of the hotel and entertain each other with music, song, dance and story. This reliance upon themselves for amusement was the outcome of their situation, Prahran being out in the bush. In 1852 there was no means of reaching Melbourne except by walking. The hotelkeepers therefore catered for their customers in the way of amusements. Paynter, at the Myall, as already indicated, held sports of the rough-and-ready description, but nevertheless the fun they evoked was the talk of the countryside, affording material for Saturday night banter. The Balmoral Castle was famed for its smoke and sing-song, and was more a favourite Saturday night resort than the other houses. The Mt. Erica Hotel was adjacent to a rude racecourse, where meetings were held from time to time, when the local crack hacks enjoyed triumphs and suffered defeats. John Munday, a well-known early Prahranite, and always a sport, now secretary of the Victorian Coursing Club, describes the race meetings on Mount Erica as the counterpart





PRAHRAN TOWN HALL AND COURT HOUSE

*In the Sixties*



of what an out-back country race meeting is to-day. Everything was done in a free and easy style, the utmost good humour prevailing. The honour of winning, and not the prize, counted most in those days.

Mount Erica Hotel was built in '53 by one Chamberlain, but the place he erected has given way to the present brick building. The original hotel buildings, when they were of wood, have in all cases fallen before the march of modern improvements, and the more stringent clauses of the building regulations of the Licensing Acts. In some places the outhouses may remain, but even such links with the past require searching for. Some of the hotels, their descriptions, and their licencees—the jovial bonifaces and “mine hosts” of the fleeting hour—have passed out, dead, buried and forgotten. One has a beer jug carved on his tombstone in St. Kilda Cemetery, but *cui bono*? Even such a landmark as the Balmoral Hotel is but a fading memory, though Balmoral Street owes its name to the pub., which was the best known of the early houses. It was a large wooden building, with a notable sign, and a big lamp in front of its bar door. That was the only public light in Commercial Road, or, indeed, for a while, in the village. Amongst the carpenters engaged in building the hotel are stated to have been two doctors and three lawyers, such was the ups and downs of professional men, as well as others, in those whirligig times. The cost of building material was very high; 5ft. palings were £5 per hundred; wattle poles, £5 per hundred; and 9 x 3 deals, 3/6 per foot. Balmoral Castle Hotel, to give the place its registered title, was built by John

Cameron, a tailor, in 1852. Its site was about where the Prahran Market Hotel now stands. Cameron bought this land from one Wilson. The tavern proved a success until 1857, when the opening of the Church Street Bridge had the effect of causing the traffic to flow along Chapel Street as the main thoroughfare, giving the traders in Commercial Road the go-by. They deserved a better fate, for the "Commercials" were an enterprising group of Prahranites. That they just missed making Commercial Road the hub of the city was their misfortune, not their fault. Cameron must have found trade bad. The lean years of depression terminated his connection with the hotel, which was burnt down. He took to his trade again, and opened a tailor's shop at the corner of High Street and York Street, where he died. The Orrong Hotel numbered amongst its attractions a greasy pole, and on high holiday a greasy pig. On one occasion a pig escaped from its pursuers at a point then known as Major's Gully, in High Street, where the pig is solemnly sworn to have disappeared in the mud! The Bush Inn was regarded as on the outskirts of civilisation, used principally as a house of call by wood-carters. Morrow's Hotel was built by Thomas Morrow, a native of Dungarvan, Waterford, Ireland. He arrived in the colony in June, 1841, in the ship "Frankfield." Of the 29 years he lived in the colony, fully one-half were spent in his hotel at Windsor, where he died on August 2, 1870. At the time of its erection, Morrow's Hotel served, being two storeys high, as a landmark to travellers from Melbourne, as they wended their way through the bush.

All licensed victuallers were compelled by law to keep a light burning from sunset to sunrise in front of their premises, for the guidance of belated travellers, though, no doubt, the glare of the lamp also answered as a lure to bring trade to their doors. The hotels were under the control of the Council, which body collected their licence fees. One of the duties of the Chairman of the municipality was to visit and inspect the premises of the various hotels, and report to the Council concerning their sanitary condition, character of the house, and reputation of the licensee, so far as the interests and convenience of the public were affected thereby.

We may now describe, with profit to the understanding, what the Council accomplished in its first year of office. In 1856, the roads, with the exception of Gardiner's Creek Road, were in their primitive state. Had that road not been the highway to the Government House it would have remained as uncleared as were the other Government roads in the vicinity. In October, 1857, the receipts of the Council, including the Government grant of £5,000, and municipal rates for 1856-7, to the value of £1,154/17/1, and the sum of £2,052/9/4 from the Central Road Board, amounted to £10,165/12/8. Of this sum the Council expended on public works £9,649/17/10, the rest of the money, with the exception of a small balance, was spent in rents and municipal expenses. Fifty-seven streets had been proclaimed in accordance with the Act of Council, 18 Victoria, No. 14.

Eighty-three chains of Commercial Road had been formed, kerbed and metalled; 80 chains of High Street metalled, and 40 chains curbed; Chapel Street was curbed at the end of the principal streets running therefrom, the channels were pitched, and corners kerbed with bluestone kerbing. The Central Road Board metalled the whole length of Chapel Street, 200 chains, £6,000 having been voted by the Legislative Assembly for that purpose. Of that sum, £2,052/9/4 had been paid to the Council for works already carried out by it in forming Chapel Street, which was legally the work of the Central Road Board, the Council not having at this date any control over Government roads, as shown in the plan of the Crown lands sales. The Council's fields of labour were amongst the streets formed by the subdivisions of Crown allotments by private owners. Following the Council's labours, we find (and the record is interesting, as disclosing the names of the oldest, and the then considered most important streets) that York Street, for 27 chains, was formed and pitched; a channel on the east side of Chapel Street, from Gardiner's Creek Road to High Street, had been pitched with bluestone; Argo, Ralston, Princes and Kent Streets, and a part of Greville Street had been formed and drained. A stone culvert had been placed in Williams Road, then called "street," and a wooden culvert removed to another part of the road. This culvert is historical in the record of the acts of the Prahran Council, for it was the first public work the

Council ever executed. Its interest justifies a copy of the original minute:—

“Report No. 2 Public Works Committee.

“Saturday, May 3, 1856.

“The Committee recommend to the Council that the tender of Mr. Josh. Thompson, for the culvert in William Street, for the sum of £75, be accepted.

“The chairman moved, and Cr. Crews seconded, the adoption of the report. Carried.”

A culvert was placed in Sargood Street (Orrong Road), and 38 chains of channels were pitched in Commercial Road and High Street. The original name given by the Road Board to this road was Orrong, but the Council changed it, or attempted to change it, to Sargood, in honour of their first chairman. The desire owed its birth to the circumstance that Mr. Sargood lived close to the Orrong Road, he having erected the first w.b. cottage that was built in Prahran past the Bush Inn. In July, 1858, a number of residents living in the vicinity memorialised the Council to drop the name of “Sargood” and return to the road’s first name, “Orrong,” a request that was complied with. The meaning of “Orrong” is not clearly defined, though the surmise that the name is a corruption of an aboriginal word is generally admitted by authorities on native names. In this instance, the meaning lies between the words *Yeurong*, a native grub, probably the name of an edible grub taken from the roots of trees, or *Corrong*, a species of snake; or *Tour-ur-Rong*, one of the many names for the laughing jackass.

The importance of proper drainage occupied the attention of the Council, and the councillors, acting

under the advice of C. Hodgkinson, C.E., the District Surveyor, decided to divide the large flow of water which accumulated in Chapel Street, flooding the roadway, into two courses. The Council was of the opinion that its scheme of drainage would be complete when Union Street was formed and its channel pitched to carry off the storm waters.

At this date the Council was urging upon the Central Road Board the necessity of pitching the channels on the north side of Gardiner's Creek Road, opposite to Murphy's paddock, and also asking the Board to complete the forming and metalling of the road from Toorak to the boundary. In April, 1857, the municipality numbered within it 4,118 males and 4,054 females; total, 8,172. It had 1,954 houses, which contained 6,923 rooms, and 42 persons were living in tents. The assessment of the district for 1857 amounted to £95,000; gross amount of rate, 1/- in £4,750.

The gross municipal rates for 1856 amounted to £3,165 9s. 3d. The call for payment of rates was cordially responded to. Because the ratepayers paid quickly, Prahran obtained the largest amount of grant in aid for municipalities voted that year by the Legislative Assembly. Prahran showed: Rates collected the previous year, £2,845/18/7; grant in aid, £4,587/0/9. East Collingwood was next on the list with £2,739/16/9, and received grant in aid, £4,416/2/5. The sum of £2,000 included in the Prahran total was collected in the current half-year's rates.

In 1859 a great portion of the land on the west side of Prahran had been cut up into streets from 30 to 66



feet in width. The larger part, however, east of Williams Road, was very thinly populated, and it did not contribute one-fourth of the rates. The census for the year shows 4,032 males and 4,133 females; total, 8,165; and the number of houses, 2,210. About a third of the land had not more than a dozen houses upon it. Ten persons owned 800 acres, and 500 of those were in the hands of trustees, and could not then be sold. The rate was one shilling, and the revenues raised from February, 1858, to February, 1859, was £5,219/16/-; the Government grant for the same period amounted to £9,893/6/-, the whole of which had been expended in forming, metalling and channelling the roads. The working expenses of the municipality, including salaries, printing, law charges, etc., averaged, during the three years of Prahran municipal existence, 7½ per cent. on the rates and Government grants. There were eleven miles of metalled roads in the district, and a considerable length of kerbing and channelling. The Council had in hand funds sufficient to metal, kerb and channel four or five miles of streets, and keep in repair those already metalled. So was the Council worthy of its motto, "*Spectemur agendo!*"

## CHAPTER IX.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE—AGITATION FOR AND AGAINST TOWN HALL  
— FOUNDATION STONE LAID OCTOBER 31, 1860 — FIRST  
RAILWAY TRAIN FROM MELBOURNE—THE "LOOP LINE"—  
COUNCIL PULLS UP RAILS — FIRST EQUITY SUIT — ENOCH  
CHAMBERS AND FOUNDRY LANE.

THE Prahran Council, as we have seen, held its first meeting in the Mechanics' Institute, built upon land James Mason has always claimed to have donated. He also avers that the site was worth, at the time of gift, £800. A conveyance is in existence dated December 24, 1855, from "James Mason to Frederick Jas. Sargood, James Stokes, and George William Rusden," trustees of the Prahran Mechanics' Institute. That deed discloses an absolute sale by James Mason, and purchase by the said parties as trustees of the land for £100. Further, we find a receipt:—

"Received the day and year first above written, of and from the written named F. J. Sargood, James Stokes, and Geo. William Rusden, the sum of £100 sterling, being the consideration money mentioned to be paid by them to me.

"£100.

J. MASON.

"Witness: S. J. Murphy,

"Solicitor, Melbourne."

Mason declares he was not paid a penny of the hundred pounds mentioned in the conveyance, and shown in the receipt as having been accepted by him. He states that for the purpose of legalising the conveyance it was imperative to disclose some monetary consideration from the purchasers to the vendor. There-



*Spectemur Agendo*

PRAHRAN TOWN HALL, 1911



fore the £100—the payment or non-payment of which has been so often questioned—was stated as a necessary observance of legal requirements. Be that as it may, the land had not quite enough frontage for the purposes of the proposed institute, so an additional twelve feet was bought from a Mr. Dummett for £100. The trustees were registered owners of the land (37.6 and 61) on January 5, 1856. The Government was appealed to for assistance, and granted £1,300 to the institute towards the cost of building and site (*viz.*, building, £1,000; site, £300). The foundation stone of the building was laid by the Acting-Governor, or “Administrator,” Major-General Edward Macarthur, as he was termed, during his period of office, from January 1 to December 26, 1856. When His Excellency arrived to perform the ceremony he did not find anyone present to receive him, except Sergeant Dowling. While awaiting the arrival of the committee, His Excellency chatted with the sergeant, who, he said, “was better off in Prahra than if he had remained in Ireland.” Without disputing the assertion, Dowling replied, with his national humour twinkling along the lines of his good-natured face, “Faith, and had your Excellency remained in Scotland, it would indade have been a long time before you would have become a governor.” The Major-General laughed at Dowling’s sally as well he might for he was born at Bath.

When the building was almost completed, it was opened in December, 1856, by Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., who had in the interval of time spent in its erection, succeeded Major-General Macarthur as

Governor of Victoria. The chairman on the occasion was J. F. L. Foster. William Westgarth was present, as were —. Hughes, Rev. W. Guinness, Rev. W. Moss, Alexander Walker, and a few residents. Mr. Moss read a paper on the committee's initial struggles, and stated the debt on the building was but £40. James Mason said the cost of the building ran to between £1,200 and £1,300. In the practical way usually followed in those early days, a subscription was then taken up, the sum obtained being £34/11/-.

The Mechanics' Institute owed its existence to the Rev. William Moss, who advocated its establishment in 1854. A meeting was held in his chapel, and the proposal was warmly taken up. A committee was appointed, amongst whom was G. W. Rusden, Clerk of Parliament, who resided on Punt Hill, in a house called "Cotmandene," where, for many years after his retirement, he devoted himself to literary pursuits, writing Histories of New Zealand and Australia. Books and papers were freely given to the institute, and a bazaar held in its aid in July of the same year produced £250 in one day. William Romanis was appointed librarian, thus becoming the first librarian, and his father filled the office of secretary to the institute. William, who was a man of literary attainments, cut short by an early death, made a classification of the books. He held the librarian's position until the completion of the Town Hall, when the library was removed there. The Romanis family has for many years been associated with Prahran. John Romanis, the grandfather of Prahran's present Town Clerk, John Romanis,

was the first undertaker in Prahran, as well as the first stationer. His shop was in Chapel Street, on the east side, almost opposite Bond Street. He took an active interest in local affairs, and his name crops up in connection with candidates' nominations for election to the Council.

The committee of the Mechanics' Institute was repeatedly voted thanks by the Prahran Council for the use of its rooms. The councillors, however, felt from the outset that it was necessary for them to have a building of their own wherein to transact the business of the municipality. On May 4, 1860, the Public Works Committee was requested to furnish plans and report on the probable cost of erecting a Town Hall and Council Chambers, and on the eleventh of the same month the Committee was authorised to expend a sum not exceeding £50 in obtaining plans for the erection of a Town Hall, Council Rooms, and Public Baths. A premium of £25 for the successful plan was offered, and thirteen drawings were submitted for consideration. They were exhibited in the Mechanics' Institute for a fortnight, and a "large number of ratepayers visited the library and expressed their unqualified approval of the plan chosen by the Council." The plan was one submitted by Crouch and Wilson, and was marked with the motto, "Economy."

On May 11, 1860, on the motion of Cr. Crews, the Town Clerk was instructed to write to the Commissioner of Lands and Survey for power to sell the five acres of land set apart for the municipality for the purpose of applying the proceeds to the erection of

Council Chambers. The Commissioner declined to permit the Council to sell the land. When the councillors learnt the Commissioner's decision they told their parliamentary representative, Mr. Michie, the position of the Council relative to the land originally appropriated for a cattle market. The land referred to was the block whereon the Alfred Hospital now stands. The Town Clerk was to tell Mr. Michie that the Commissioner of Lands had been applied to to allow the land to be sold for the erection of Council Chambers, in consequence of the original appropriation being objected to, and that the Board of Lands and Survey, under directions of the Commissioner, had sent the Council a letter, in which the request of the Council was refused. The councillors wanted Mr. Michie to ask in the Legislative Assembly why such appropriation had been refused, when a like request had been acceded to in the case of the Municipal Council of St. Kilda. Mr. Michie, afterwards Sir Archibald Michie, Q.C., did not obtain any satisfaction, so the hopes of the Council in that direction were not realised. On September 13, advertisements were inserted in the *Argus*, the *Prahran Advertiser* and the *St. Kilda Chronicle*, inviting tenders for the erection of the Town Hall. The specification stated that "the land on which the building is to be erected has a frontage of 94 feet to Chapel Street, and a depth of 260 feet, and is immediately adjoining the Court House." The land so described had been tendered by T. B. Payne, and the Council, to quote from its minute book, had accepted the tender, "provided that Mr. Payne will take £300 for the same, the land with



a frontage of 121 feet to Chapel Street, by 263 feet, bordering on Greville Street." As Payne bought the same land at the Crown sales at £8 an acre, he was not long in deciding to accept the offer of the Council. The upset price put upon the same Block 41 by the Government in the 1850 land sales was £1/10/- per acre. The Court House and lock-up were on the Greville Street corner of the site purchased out of money obtained from the first £5,000 grant in aid. The grant in aid was earmarked with a precedent preceding its payment that the money was only to be used for forming, draining and channelling Chapel Road and High Street, "except the sum of £150, appropriated for the purchase of land for erecting a Court House and lock-up thereon." The Government and the Council were to be joint owners of the land, provided the Council erected the necessary buildings. On May 16, 1857, the Council received a letter from the Commissioner of Public Works, stating that the "Law Officers of the Crown had been instructed to convey to the Council the land on which the Court House now stands."

It may not be altogether out of place to state at this point of time that the justices' zeal in the fifties was all that could be desired, the Court work being well attended to, but in 1860 the novelty of sitting upon the Bench had worn off. The Council desired the attendance of a stipendiary magistrate. The Attorney-General was told by the Council that in consequence of the very irregular attendance of the local magistrates the Court had to be adjourned on several occasions, to the great inconvenience of the public. If it were not, the

Attorney-General is further informed, for the very regular attendance of the chairman (Cr. Daniel L. Long), who, like his namesake, came to sit in judgment, the difficulty of obtaining redress would be considerably increased. The Attorney-General turned a deaf ear to the Council's complaint, so the councillors decided to take the unique step of advertising the indifference of the Attorney-General to the wants of Prahran Police Court litigants in the *Government Gazette*. Strangely enough, the Government inserted the advertisement, thereby allowing the *Gazette* to be a press pillory for a member of the Ministry. In the advertisement, the Prahran Council cried aloud that the application for a stipendiary magistrate was "made on January 14, 1860, and that no answer had been received up to April, 1860." Thus was the Attorney-General's default made public property!

To return to the Town Hall site. The Council soon realised that the location was not to be chosen without considerable opposition. The strings of commercial interests began to tug from the north end of the municipality. On September 14, Cr. Campbell moved, and Cr. Wisewould seconded—

"That tenders be invited for a plot of land suitable for the erection of a Town Hall, the land to be situate in Commercial Road or Chapel Street, to be within 500 yards north of the Court House, and having a frontage of 130 feet, if at the corner of a street, if otherwise, 150 feet, and a depth of 200 feet."

This motion was carried. On September 23, the Public Works Committee presented its report, No. 23, stating that the following tenders for land for the Town Hall had been received. The tenders are interesting, as an evidence of the value set upon land in Prahran in 1860,

though it is reasonable to presume that the full value of the land was asked, in view of the councillors being the contemplated purchasers.

Messrs. Nott, Johnston and Wightman offered land situated on the west side of Chapel Street, bounded on the north by Mr. Barry's paddock, on the south by an intended street, 30 feet wide, on the west by property belonging to William Miller, and having a frontage to Chapel Street of 120 feet, by a depth of 140 feet, for the sum of £450.

Mr. Andrew Izett, agent for Mr. Hawkins, offered land in Commercial Road, at the west corner of Cato Street, with 100 feet frontage, by a depth of 150 feet, with a right-of-way of 10 feet, for the sum of £350.

Mr. Howard, land on the west side of Chapel Street and north of Grosvenor Street, with a frontage of 115 feet, by a depth of 190 feet, for the sum of £550.

Mr. Darvill, land on the east side of Chapel Street and corner of Carlton Street, with a frontage to Chapel Street of 120 feet, by a depth of 203 feet, for the sum of £840. Also, land in Commercial Road, having a frontage to Commercial Road of 90 feet, by a depth of 100 feet to Clarence Street, for the sum of £150.

Mrs. Stone offered land in Commercial Road, east of the Bush Inn, at 15/- per foot.

Only one piece of land, viz., that of Mr. Darvill's, at £840, complied with the conditions laid down in the advertisement. A memorial was presented to the Council at the same time as the tenders were received. It was signed by ratepayers interested in Commercial Road, such well remembered pioneers, mostly now dead, as J. T. Izod, Andrew Izett, William Miller, C. B. Butchers, J. Purnell, John Cameron, Alexander Cattanach, G. Massey, Elias Trenchard, and others attaching their signatures. They urged the Council to accept the "piece of land at the corner of Cato Street as a suitable site for your Town Hall and Municipal Chambers, believing it to be one of the best that can be obtained." The memorialists regarded it as a

“great pity” to have so noble a building erected in the Court House yard, more especially as that would be required for extended police accommodation. So far as the “great pity” argument was concerned, councillors virtually said, with the first Stranger in “Timon of Athens”:—

“Men must learn now with pity to dispense.  
For policy sits above conscience.”

The appeal to the sentiment of pity was buttressed with the more substantial trust in the axiom that “money talks,” or, maybe, that even to a corporate conscience the “jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels.” The memorial set out also that “in order to offer this piece of land at the lowest possible price, we have subscribed one hundred pounds, so that it may be offered to you for £350 instead of £450.” The memorial was ordered to be taken into consideration when the estimates of the building were before the Council. A motion designed to deal with the subject of the Town Hall site without delay was launched, and met with an amendment by Cr. Lacey, to adjourn the question for six months. Finally it was agreed to deal with the question of site in committee, on September 21. At that meeting of the councillors to settle the momentous question, Cr. Wisewould moved—

“That the site now at the disposal of the Council be the one agreed upon, seeing that no other site amongst those presented for selection offers sufficient inducement for the necessary extra outlay.”

An amendment was moved by Cr. Campbell in favour of the land offered by Nott, Johnston and Wightman, but it was defeated, and the motion carried. Then a tender was accepted for the building, at a cost

of £4,812, to include the entire completion of the building with the exception of the outside stucco work.

At the same committee meeting, 88 ratepayers sent in a memorial, wherein they intimated that the "expenditure of a large sum of money in the building of a Town Hall at the present time is undesirable." A request was made, also, to the Council, to call a public meeting to enable the ratepayers to consider the desirability or otherwise of erecting such a building." Amongst those who signed it were: W. Hammill, Orrong Road; Edward Rule, grocer, High Street; John Mitchell, Commercial Road; John Palmer, High Street; John Bailey, John Morehead, Argo Street; Alex. Cattanach, Commercial Road; Dunlop and Edwards, Commercial Road. The memorial was ordered to lie on the table, the councillors voting against a motion by Cr. Lacey, "That the request of the memorialists be complied with."

The news that the Council had declared for a site, selected a design, and accepted tenders for building the Town Hall, soon reached Commercial Road and South Yarra ratepayers. Each district strongly demurred the proposal. Those interested in Commercial Road saw the building that they thought would centralise the business of the municipality about to elude them. Commercial Road was the location, in their opinion, for the Town Hall, and the only place. Meetings were held, and the opposing ratepayers fired off verbal bolts at the Council. The South Yarra ratepayers, grinding their axes, and possibly their teeth, "protested and protested," but the Council ignored the seething agitations.

The "indignity," as the Council's silence was termed by the South Yarra ratepayers, served to rouse them to more public action. They decided to hold an "indignation" meeting. The keen interest always displayed by the early men of Prahran in all public movements remains as a distinctive feature of those times. The Council guarded its dignity with almost laughable exaggeration of its municipal importance. The ratepayers apparently took their cue from the councillors, and both of them seemed to be invariably alert to detect anyone "treading on the tails of their coats." On this occasion the ratepayers did not belie the tradition, for like cannons with—

. . . "their bowels full of wrath  
And ready mounted were they, to spit forth their iron indignation."

The South Yarra ratepayers, on October 16, held their "indignation" meeting at the South Yarra Club Hotel. Its business was stated to be "in opposition to the proposed erection of a Town Hall." The leading medical man, and a very old resident, Dr. Wooldridge, an ascetic looking man, with a black moustache and olive complexion, occupied the chair. His property had a frontage of about a hundred feet to Gardiner's Creek Road, and was at the corner of Avoca Street. The doctor opened the meeting with a few remarks concerning the acts of the councillors in trying to push Prahran ahead at the expense of South Yarra. A Mr. Day then moved, without any forewords:—

"That this meeting resolves that the erection of a Town Hall at an expense exceeding £6,000 is unnecessary at the present time, for the reason that many more important works, including the formation of streets, lighting the municipality with gas, and draining are urgently required."

The motion was seconded by a Mr. Simpson, and then Mr. Cameron made a speech that occupies the best part of a column in a newspaper report. In this rambling statement the principal points made were that "the blundering incapacity of the councillors had rendered it necessary for the ratepayers to speak out. Some of the councillors had spoken in an ill-mannered way about the ratepayers and their protest, characterising them as wanting in commonsense, because they could not see the propriety of spending £6,000 on a building at a place near the extremity of the municipality."

Just think of the Town Hall being described to-day as at the "extremity of the municipality!" The position was, however, that even in the sixties, South Yarra formed a village of its own, as also did Windsor and Prahran, with more or less houses dotted along the intervening distances, linking hamlets together. That this was so is seen by the Melbourne Directory map for 1861, advertised as being accurately compiled from Government maps. In that map, South Yarra is shown as bounded on the north by Domain Road, and on the south by Gardiner's Creek Road. It extends on the east as far as Murphy Street, and on the west to the Church of England Grammar School. Prahran is outlined as from Gardiner's Creek Road to High Street, Punt Road and Williams Road. Windsor, from High Street to Wellington Street, Punt Road on the west, Chapel Road forming the eastern boundary. Beyond Williams Street (now Road), which road Mr. Justice Hartley Williams's father stated, in an election speech at Prahran, was named after him, only two streets

appear, viz., Mt. Pleasant Road and Long Sight Road, now New Street. In 1859, a year before the Town Hall was built, there was not a house in Chapel Street between High Street and Union Street on the west side. When one was met it was that of William Brotherton, a reporter, on the south-west corner of Union Street with Chapel Street. He was the father of A. L. Brotherton, who has, since his boyhood, been associated, in one way or another, with the local press.

South Yarra and Windsor ratepayers were always dissatisfied with the Prahran Council. Many times attempts were made by their residents to cut the painter. As early as August, 1857, the South Yarra men presented a petition to the Governor, asking for a proclamation of South Yarra District as a separate municipality. The petition was not granted, the reply being that His Excellency "has been advised that he has no power to erect into any other municipality any portion of the present municipal district." That official declaration was held by the Council to have settled the question for all time, and, therefore, subsequent irate ratepayers and their indignation meetings did not disturb the serenity of the Council. One night, at Windsor, a meeting of would-be seceders rose as one man, shouting, and continuing to shout, like ratepayers possessed, "To St. Kilda! To St. Kilda!" recalling now, in writing, the historical Franco-German yells, destined to follow years afterwards, "A Berlin! A Berlin!" The cries of the Windsor ratepayers led no more to the path of victory than did the frenzied outpourings of the volatile Parisians on the memorable



sunny day of July 15, 1870. On one occasion the Council sent Town Clerk John Craven to Windsor to read His Excellency's decision. The meeting was an angry one, but John Craven delivered the official intimation that the speakers might save their breath and burn their petitions.

In August, 1858, the Windsor ratepayers made another attempt to break away from Prahran, and effect an amalgamation with St. Kilda Municipality. John Cunningham, who was an ex-chairman of the Prahran Municipality, was in the chair. The meeting was a stormy one, Cr. J. B. Crews taking the platform on behalf of the Council. A Mr. Campbell called upon the Windsor ratepayers to free themselves “from under a wicked despotism, and if Prahran people saw that, why did they not let them go free? Let the Prahran people let them go free, and in God's name they would go free. (Loud laughter.) The Windsor people would be better off under the auspices of Russia, or any other foreign power, than those of Prahran.” The meeting appointed Messrs. Campbell, Wilson, Frayne, Hicks, Walker, Davis, Beattie and Steele to take means to effect the severance, but, as usual, the movement flickered out. A knowledge of this might have saved Cameron continuing in the strain he did, that the “South Yarra ratepayers wished to protest against the erection of the Town Hall before they separated South Yarra from Prahran, a contingency that was not unlikely to take place if the Prahran Council continued to pursue its present course. There were over 50 streets not made, and that the number was 50 was ascertained

by a gentleman going through the municipality and counting them." They were energetic ratepayers in those days! Cameron tells us further about the manners of the Prahran Council, which, if he speaks as a truthful witness, were somewhat different from the full meed of courtesy that is extended to all the citizens by the corporate body of to-day.

Cameron had a lance to break with five of the councillors. They had refused to receive, "even receive," the petition from the South Yarra ratepayers. In view of the indignity the Prahran Council had thrust upon them only one course was open, and that was to petition His Excellency the Governor to stay the hands of those reckless and extravagant men.

A Mr. Ridvutt supported Cameron, and made a definite statement. He said that when the land comprising the site was about to be conveyed to the Council, one of the councillors, in 1857, proposed that it should be conveyed for a police court and engine house (fire), and a look-out, exclusively. But Cr. Crews, who lived in close proximity, had moved an amendment in the addition of the words, "and general municipal purposes." This the Council had inserted in the deed of conveyance, so it was evident that some of them, as far back as 1857, had their eyes open to their own interests. They were misappropriating the Government grant indeed. They did as they liked, and ignored the ratepayers, and for that reason he favoured the petition to the Governor, asking him to stop the erection of the Town Hall. In the end the meeting carried a motion to that effect.

The Council stood firm, although its members felt the strain of the combat. Hard blows were given by those opposed to the Town Hall. That the Council had its friends was evidenced by a memorial signed by 200 ratepayers, commending the councillors for "the very efficient and judicious manner in which our municipal business has been transacted." The 200 faithful ones also suggested to "your Honourable Council the propriety of naming an early day for laying the foundation stone of the new Town Hall, believing that such an event should not pass over unnoticed, as the noble structure selected will give character to the municipality, and supply a want long felt in the district." Smitten hip and thigh, the councillors resented the reiterated misrepresentations of their acts, and in the end were compelled to issue a pamphlet in their justification. Their attitude towards the dissatisfied ratepayers may be gleaned from their forewords in the pamphlet, which read: "In consequence of the extraordinary and exaggerated statements which have been put forth at the various meetings held in opposition to the erection of the Town Hall, Council Chambers, and Free Public Library, as well as the representations made by some of the deputations who waited on His Excellency the Governor, the following facts of the case are submitted to the ratepayers, in order that those who have been misled may pause before consenting to assist in endeavouring to waste the funds of the municipality in a law suit." The councillors pointed out that the "*first* expression of opinion from the ratepayers at all

unfavourable was the memorial from Hammill, Rule, Mitchell and other signatories, although the subject had been under discussion from May 4, and almost daily before them from July 2 to September 28, by advertisement in the *Argus* and local papers. On October 5, one week after the acceptance of the tenders, two resolutions passed at a public meeting, condemning the proceedings of the Council, were presented, but were not received; the contract had been then entered into, and the Council were powerless to rescind it, had there been any grounds for so doing." When the fight was at its height, those opposed to the present Town Hall site poured the vials of their wrath upon Cr. Crews. They charged him in highway and byway, in public bars and upon public platforms, with favouring the site selected by the Council because of its proximity to his property, his baker's shop, next door to the Town Hall. This feeling of resentment was so virulently fostered by Cr. Crew's enemies that the hatred so possessed a half-crazy fellow that he attacked and threatened to murder Cr. Crews in High Street. His threats were deemed serious enough for that councillor to have the madman bound over to keep the peace.

After the stress and strum the councillors enjoyed their victory. They frowned on the storm with angry brows, but it was in sunshine that they struck the blow. And that blow fell on Wednesday, October 31, 1860, when the foundation stone of the Prahran Town Hall was laid with appropriate ceremony. The stone is *in situ* about the centre of the Town Hall floor. Cr. Long, the chairman of the municipality, in opening the pro-

ceedings, said that the Council had gone to greater expense than was at first anticipated in the erection of the building, but that was to be attributed to the success of the free public library. They required a room for it in the new building. The Council had spent £7,000 in works during the past year, and it was satisfactory for him to state that they had enough money lying in the bank to pay for the erection of the building. In a short time the Council would go further and erect baths, and have gas laid on, and lay out some squares in the municipality, and so set example to others. Cr. Crews said that the ratepayers' opposition was not so much to the Town Hall as to the site upon which it was erected. The Chairman of the Finance Committee, in addressing those present, said the proposal had been before the ratepayers for five months and that the plans had been exhibited, and everything went on well until plans had been accepted. Other speeches of no present moment were made, and three cheers for the Queen terminated the ceremony. A copy of the deed placed under the foundation stone reads:—

#### MUNICIPALITY OF PRAHRAN.

This memorandum, made on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Town Hall, Council Chambers and Free Public Library, Prahran, on October 31, 1860, and in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, witnesseth that this building is being erected for the purpose of carrying out the Act of Council, 18 Vic., No. 15, called The Municipal Act. Cap-

tain-General and Governor-in-Chief, and Vice-Admiral of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B.; Executive Council; Commander of Her Majesty's forces in the Australian Colonies, Major-General the Hon. Thomas Simson Pratt, C.B.; the Chief Secretary, the Hon. William Nicholson; the Attorney-General, the Hon. John Dennistoun Wood; the Solicitor-General, the Hon. J. F. Martley; the Treasurer, the Hon. Jas. McCulloch; the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey, the Hon. Augustus F. A. Grievess; the Commissioner of Public Works, the Hon. Vincent Pyke; the Commissioner of Trade and Customs, the Hon. John R. Bailey; the Postmaster-General, the Hon. Hibberd Newton; the Hon. Thomas Howard Fellows, without office. Municipal Council: D. R. Long, Esq., J.P., Chairman; Councillors John Coates, Chairman of Public Works Committee; James Wisewould, Chairman of Finance, Legislature and Rates; Councillors John Branscombe Crews, Henry William Lang, Job Phillips and John Campbell. Town Clerk, John Craven. Surveyor, Thomas Norton Goodwin. Architects, Messrs. Crouch and Wilson. Builder, Benjamin James. Newspapers, the *Melbourne Herald*, *Argus*, *Age*, *Prahran Advertiser*, and *St. Kilda Chronicle*. Gold, silver and copper coins of the realm; tracings

on cloth of the ground plan and front elevation of the building.

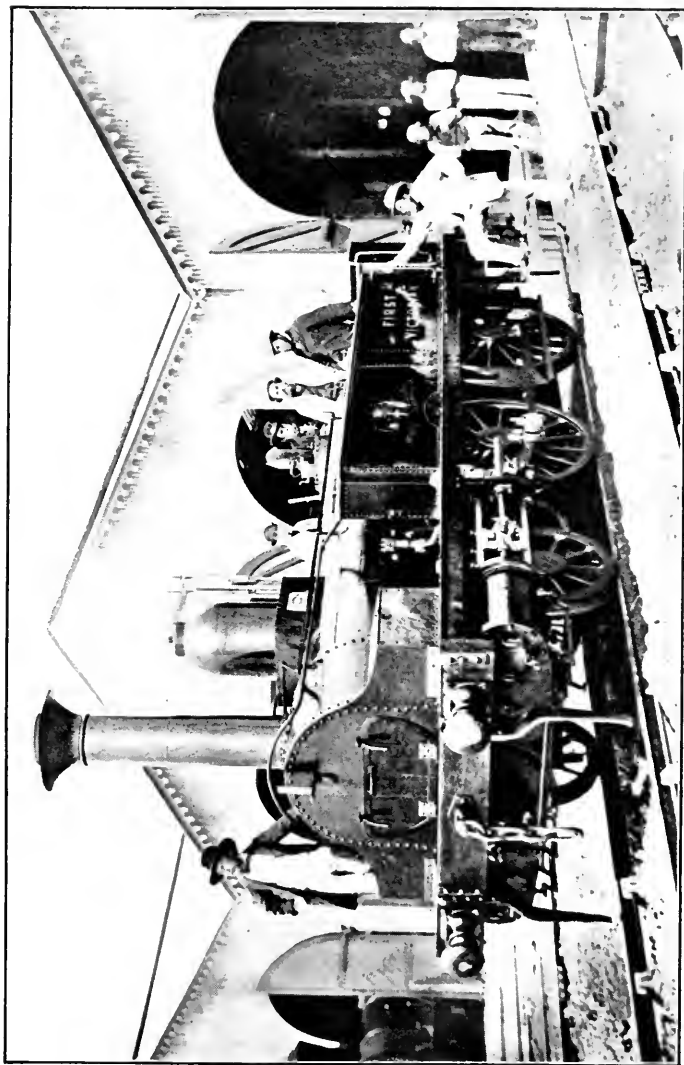
The Town Hall, built of bricks, remained for some time without the plaster coat that to-day envelops the building. When the place was stuccoed an ornamental iron palisade was placed in front, as far as the building line of Chapel Street. A lawn was formed inside the railing. Subsequently the railing was removed and sold to the Baptist Church authorities, who placed it in front of the Chapel Street Baptist Church.

The Melbourne *Herald* describes the building as “designed in the Italian style, the principal facade occupying a frontage of 85 feet, and rising to the height of 46 feet. The entrance by a few steps beneath a recessed portico with Ionic columns 30 feet high and in either sideways, will be the offices of the Town Clerk and Surveyor having entrances to the portico, and on the right, that of the main hall, the other offices will be situated. At the rear, and between these offices and a large hall is a wide corridor the whole length of the building, at the northern end of which is the tower, which will be carried to a length of 96 feet, and will contain a clock and bell. The first floor will be used as a public library, the large hall is 70 feet by 40 feet, and 28 feet high, and is lighted from both ends and the west side. The total cost, exclusive of subsequent stuccoing, will not exceed £4,812.”

The Town Hall was opened in March, 1861, with a concert, for the benefit of the Free Public Library. The next use of the hall, April 5, was in connection with a concert by the Amateur Ethiopian Serenaders, in aid

of the funds of the Prahran Ladies' Visiting Society. On June 30 the first ball held in the hall was given by the councillors, in commemoration of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. At the laying of the foundation stone of the Town Hall, the chairman, Cr. Long, stated that the Council had gone to more expense than at first intended, owing to the success of the Free Library at the Mechanics' Institute. From the first this library filled a void in the intellectual life of the community. Ratepayers appreciated and took advantage of the privileges offered. The Council in those days, no less than the present, was proud of the library. That this pride has always been in evidence is seen in the magnificent institution the city possesses to-day, second only to Melbourne's great Public Library. The books belonging to the Council in the Mechanics' Institute, when the councillors moved into the Town Hall, were taken with them. In time the Council unanimously decided to establish a Municipal Free Library, on the plan of the Melbourne Public Library. The chairman, Cr. Long, and Crs. Crews and Wisewould, formed the first Library Committee, and £150 was voted as preliminary expenses for the purchase of books during the coming year. On August 21 the library was opened to the public, in a room now forming a portion of the surveyor's room. The then custodian of the books, Mr. Nunington, was both librarian and hall-keeper. On the opening day the library contained 730 volumes, including 130 duplicate volumes, lent by the trustees of the Public Library. Of the 730 volumes, 355 volumes were purchased by the





ENGINE BUILT AT PRAHRAN BY ENOCH CHAMBERS

*The First Locomotive constructed in Victoria*

*Foreman Barnes is the figure in front of the Engine. Enoch Chambers is the third man in the "cab."*



Council, 103 were on loan from ratepayers, while 106 were donated by ratepayers anxious for the success of the institution. The average attendance of visitors was 198 per week, described as "principally young men." The progress of the library has been highly satisfactory ever since its inception. In 1862 the returns show that 5,965 persons had visited the library. The Council's vote of £150 had been expended as follows:—Additional fittings, £39/16/6; librarian's salary and gas, £34/2/-; leaving the sum of £76/1/6 for the purchase of books. The £150 had been further supplemented by the proceeds of the ball on the occasion of the opening of the Town Hall, amounting to £32/9/4. The number of books was 850, "including the most eminent works in English literature, biography, travels, and the arts and sciences."

Not a month elapsed between the laying of the Town Hall's foundation stone and the arrival of the first train in Prahran from Melbourne. That notable event took place on Saturday evening, November 24, 1860, when the train steamed across the bridge at South Yarra, having on board Patrick Higgins, the contractor for the line as far as Windsor; the engineer of the Melbourne and Suburban Railway Company, Francis Bell; Mr. Lilley, the secretary; the Hon. George Coppin, John Houston, M.L.A., W. Randle, the directors; Smith and Merritt, the civil engineers; and a number of gentlemen. The engine used was purchased from the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company, and bore the name of "The Hercules." At the time it was one of the most powerful in the colony, capable of drawing 100 tons on

a dead level. The rails were also bought from the Geelong Company, and the carriages were made in the colony by W. Grant. The bridge was erected by John Browne, contractor, and the ironwork, 250 tons in weight, had only arrived five weeks before from England. The celerity with which the iron was built into the bridge was the subject of favourable comment. Its central span is 137 feet; its sides, 35 feet high; and its distance from the waters of the Yarra, 26 feet. In describing the line, a report says: "After crossing the bridge it passes over a heavy embankment, which is rendered necessary by a deep swamp, and thence through a deep cutting to Gardiner's Creek Road, which is intersected by a substantial bridge. In the construction of the line 200,000 yards of earth were removed." The fares were, from Melbourne to Chapel Street Station (now Windsor), first class, single 1/-, second 9d.,; first class, return 1/6, second 1/3; monthly ticket, first 30/-, second 25/-. With reference to the "deep swamp"—when the line was being built the embankment leading to the bridge slipped bodily down one night into Yarra Street. Upon the embankment were a number of trucks, which also went pell-mell into the swamp's greasy mud. The contractor deemed the labour of their recovery of more value than the trucks, so he built another embankment, leaving the trucks, where their remains lie buried, in the roadway of Yarra Street.

In 1857, the St. Kilda and Brighton Railway was incorporated to run a line from Brighton Beach to Windsor, the terminus of the line from Melbourne,

owned by the Suburban Railway Company. In addition to the power to run a line to Windsor, the company was authorised to construct what was called a "loop line" between the St. Kilda Terminus, in Fitzroy Street, to the Windsor Railway Station. The two companies afterwards amalgamated, and were registered under the name of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway Company. In the terms of the purchase (defined by an Act of Parliament 269, in Sec. 31), the company was relieved from the necessity of maintaining the "loop line." It had the option within two years to complete the "loop line," or if the company did not do so, then all the Crown lands granted for that line were to revert to the Crown. The line, starting from Windsor Station, went through where Gladstone Park is now, and crossed Punt Road between Raleigh and Union Streets, and swung round through the South Melbourne Park into Fitzroy Street Station. In the event of the reversion taking place, then the Company was empowered to sell the private lands, that is, the land about Gladstone Park. The Company did not complete the line within two years, though the embankments had been removed, and the Crown lands had reverted to the Crown.

On the private land, however, between Union Street and Punt Road, then known as Hoddle Street, the railway still existed, and was used by the company for the purpose of carrying bluestone screenings to a depot at Hoddle Street, at the instance of Enoch Chambers, who erected some stone shoots there. The line was also used for shunting trains from Brighton, and

the railway gates in Union Street were constantly shut, in fact, the street was almost blocked to traffic. The Prahran Council, as the local guardian of the people's rights over the free thoroughfare of the borough's streets, resented the action of the company. It pointed out that the company could not chop and change an Act of Parliament to suit its convenience, and to increase its profit as carriers of stone from Richmond quarries to the Hoddle Street siding. The Council finally intimated that its members would attend with a gang of men and tear up the rails crossing Union Street, and break down the railway gates and fences as an obstruction to the street. The company evidently did not regard the threat seriously, but one morning, in the early hours, the Council, with the Town Clerk (Mr. John Craven), the Borough Solicitor (Mr. J. C. Turner), and a gang of men, accompanied by some police, proceeded to Union Street, and commenced the task of ripping up the rails. In the meantime the officials of the company appeared on the scene. For a time it appeared as if there would be a free fight between the men of the company and the Council's men prizing up the rails. To save bloodshed, the parties agreed that the right of the Council should be tested in the Equity Court, the company undertaking not to use the line until judgment was given.

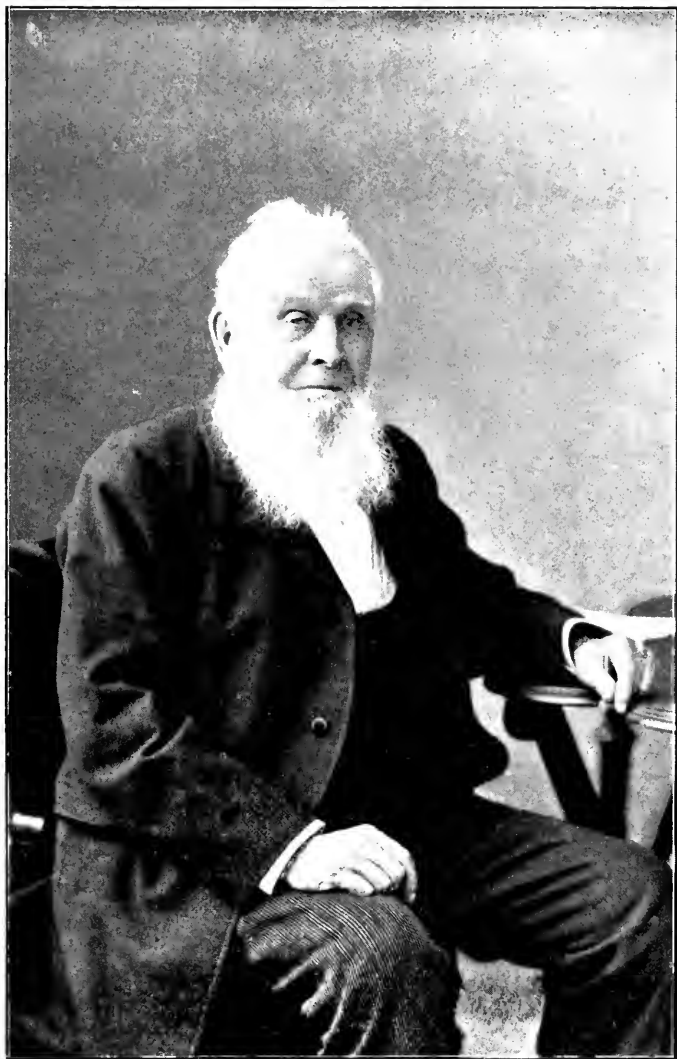
The suit was heard on April 17, 1869, before Mr. Justice Molesworth; Mr. J. W. Stephen, Mr. Holroyd (afterwards Judge), and Mr. A'Beckett (afterwards Judge), appeared for the Railway Company, while Mr.

Higinbotham (afterwards Chief Justice), and Mr. Webb (afterwards Judge) represented the Council, a truly remarkable array of forensic talent! The plaintiffs contended that as the "rails had been laid down legally in the first instance, they were not an encroachment on the street, and that the Council had no right to be judges in their own case, and decide that the company had forfeited all right to the use of Union Street." The Council relied upon the Act of Parliament. In delivering judgment, Mr. Justice Molesworth said, with a touch of irony, that no irreparable damage was alleged. "If the rails were broken up, and the traffic stopped, the measure of damages was easily ascertainable, and those damages would be the amount that was payable by the company to Mr. Chambers, for whom they carried the stone, for loss of traffic. The line had not been completed; some of it had fallen into disuse, and the company were therefore the defaulters, and judgment would be given against them; the injunctions would be refused, costs to be costs in the cause." In this way, by a legal *tour de force*, the Prahran Council wiped the "loop line" off the map of Prahran, and left Union Street with one set of railway gates instead of two.

The "loop line" went across the swampy ground at the end of the Albert Park Lake, on wooden trestles, and the noise the train made is still a memory with men who were then youngsters. The stone shoots referred to were built out of the heavy timber used in the trestles. The Enoch Chambers mentioned in this, the first equity suit of the Council, arrived in Melbourne

in March, 1853. For lack of suitable accommodation he was compelled to take up his abode, with his young family, in Canvas Town. Shortly afterwards he was successful in obtaining a contract for clearing a portion of St. Kilda Road of its timber. In order to utilise the timber he made saw pits in the vicinity of the lagoon known to-day as Albert Park Lake, but which at that time was a more or less reed-choked swamp, the resort of wild fowl. As the gum trees were axed down, and their stumps grubbed, the timber was drawn by bullocks to the pits, and there cut and split into firewood lengths for the Melbourne market. The contract for clearing the road, through the profits won from the sale of the wood, proved very remunerative. Chambers was able to start in his own trade, that of an engineer, which he had learnt in Nottinghamshire, his native place. He established a foundry in Prahran wherein he employed about twenty men. The castings made there were turned at his engineering shop in Little Collins Street. The foundry, known far and wide, had its frontage to Charles Street, along High Street to Perth Street. On the same land Chambers erected a two-storied red brick house, where he dwelt. The building is still a prominent dwelling in Perth Street. An allotment encroached upon the block at the High Street frontage, on which was a house tenanted by the late Frank Stephen, who was years afterwards the City Solicitor of Melbourne. He was the father of Lady Madden, the wife of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Madden. Her Ladyship was born in that cottage. Frank Stephen, whose





JOHN CRAVEN

*The First Town Clerk of Prahran*



full name was Francis John Sidney Stephen, was an early councillor of the city. One evening the chairman fined him £1 for non-attendance at a Council meeting. Councillors were often fined for absence, without apology, in sums of 5/- and 10/- a time.

The back of the foundry was flanked by a lane wherein were three wooden shanties, occupying about 60 feet. This passage-way, of some 10 feet in width, was the oft-mentioned Foundry Lane of Prahran. The only other foundries were Langlands and Fultons, and with those rival shops Chambers competed. Chambers wrought most of the iron girders for the railways, as well as casting lamp posts then in use about Melbourne. In 1864 he made, and then erected in or near Mary Street, Richmond, a stone-breaking machine, which enabled him to enter into numerous contracts for supplying road metal to the growing municipalities of Prahran and St. Kilda, and incidentally tempted the M.H.B.W. Railway Company to act as his carriers of stone, leading them into the disastrous equity suit. In May, 1870, Chambers met his death by being thrown from his buggy while driving along Dandenong Road. Up to that date his funeral was the largest and longest—it extended from High Street to Dandenong Road—ever seen in Prahran. His workmen, to the number of 132, walked four abreast behind the hearse. Along the entire route, as well as in other parts of the borough, the shops of the tradesmen were closed. The blinds of private houses were drawn, while at the Town Hall (Enoch Chambers was an ex-councillor), as well as many private establishments, flags were flown at half-

mast. Five hundred people followed the hearse in 73 vehicles, 14 cabs, and a number on horseback. Over 2,000 spectators lined the route to St. Kilda Cemetery. He left a wife and seven children, his eldest son, William Chambers, at the time of his death, being captain of the Southern Rifles. An insurance of £5,000 was effected on his life, and the premium had been left on its actual due date unpaid; the month's grace expired on the Monday following the fatal accident, so that his family was just in time to redeem the policy and obtain the insurance money. To Enoch Chambers and Prahran belongs the distinction of having built the first locomotive ever made in Victoria, the said locomotive having been cast at the foundry, turned at his engineering shop, erected at the foundry, and ran from there, on rails, on to the Brighton railway line. When he died his estate was involved, and in the grip of the National Bank. In the terms of his overdraft was a clause by which he thoughtfully provided that Mrs. Chambers should have the use and occupation of the two-storied house until her death. She survived him for a number of years, dying at the age of 95 years.

Foundry Lane was the connecting link between Greville Street, on the Town Hall side, with Greville Road on the Punt Road side. Both of those streets, compared with Foundry Lane, were wide streets, Greville Street being 40 feet, Greville Road 50 feet, while Foundry Lane was only 14 feet, with a gutter on one side. The bank authorities, on being approached by the Council, in 1880, fell in with the proposition to widen Foundry Lane, provided they did not lose

thereby. The bank people were fully seized of the advantage of selling to the frontage of a 50 feet street; the residents in Greville Road also realised that a chance to increase the value of their properties had presented itself. The Council voted first £400, then another £100, to carry out the project, while two property holders, C. and A. Burgess, canvassed the College Lawn residents, who subscribed £300. The bank accepted the sum collected, and the land was conveyed to the Council. The road was thus widened at Foundry Lane, and swallowed up in Greville Street, “Greville Road” passing out on to the scrap heap, always a large one where a city is concerned, of disused and discarded names. The bank sold its frontages to the newly-made road, Crews and Arkle acting as the auctioneers. The narrow strip from Charles Street to Prahran Station was not a portion of Foundry Lane. It has in its turn been widened, as has also a portion of Greville Street, on the Town Hall side, Greville Street in that respect having had a somewhat chequered career. The brick houses on the block bounded by Foundry Lane were built upon foundations formed by slag from the furnaces. The land on the other side of the lane was sold by G. W. Taylor, as late as August, in 1880. The eloquent little Welshman stated in his advertisement that “the lots were the result of the sub-division of the estate abutting on the site formerly known as Foundry Lane, now happily a thing of the past.” This G. W. Taylor (Mayor of Prahran in 1884-5) was a man of remarkable public spirit, and insanely optimistic views. He it was who

presented to the city the statues erected in the Victoria Gardens. For a time he seemed the particular favourite of fortune; the kind of fortune that Fate was flinging about with a lavish hand in the land booming days. He declared himself, one night after a Council meeting in the Mayor's room, "a millionaire." Champagne flowed, speeches were made as mad as any ever conceived; the company was intoxicated with the spirit of good-fellowship if not Taylor's hospitality. A scribe, writing on the occasion, infuses some of the sparkling foolery into his lines:—

"And the millionaire?

'Oh, my 'art, me Angelino ho,  
I am a million hair!'

The little Welshman, sturdy, steady stickler, who, like the Phoenix has arisen from his ashes, is now, ye gods, a millionaire! 'For months, gentlemen,' said the Mayor, 'I was suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth, but British Bulldog Pluck pulled me through, gentlemen, and I'm a millionaire!'

When the land boom burst, Taylor went to London, and there fell on days not usually associated with millionaires.



ENOCH CHAMBERS



GEORGE MESSERVEY

*The First Schoolmaster*





## CHAPTER X.

THE FIRE BRIGADE—SOUTH YARRA WATER WORKS COMPANY—  
COUNCILLORS FINED—CHURCH STREET BRIDGE—PRAHRAN AND  
SOUTH YARRA LADIES' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY—INDEPENDENT  
CHURCH AND OTHER CHURCHES.

IN 1856, on December 27, the Prahran Court House was finished, a brick building with a portico. It stood on the ground where the Post Office now suffers its congested existence, at the corner of Chapel and Greville Streets. The first offender who ever appeared in the Prahran Police Court was a baker, who was haled before the chairman of the municipality, Cr. Sargood, charged with selling light-weight bread, found guilty, and fined. A claim for the "distinction" of first offender has been made on behalf of the late Dr. Llewellyn, who rode his horse along a footpath in defiance of Sergeant Dowling, only stopping at the Court House door, for which offence the doctor was fined. In July, while the Court House was in progress of building, the Council was considering the desirability of erecting municipal offices adjoining the lock-up keeper's rooms, as well as suitable provision for a fire engine and hose. The Council early recognised (November 22, 1856) the paramount importance of some organised attempt being made to cope with outbreaks of fire. A motion was passed in terms of high approval and support of any volunteers who would come forward and form a brigade. As a result of that

invitation, the first Prahran Fire Brigade was organised on December 6 of the same year. The original firemen were: Captain, W. Robinson Pye; members, Robert Good, Ezra Westneat, W. H. Lacey, W. Phillips, C. Doherty, —. Bradshaw, and J. B. Crews. The manual fire engine arrived in Prahran on February 7, 1857, the brigade turning out and meeting the machine at the Myall Hotel, where success to fire fighting with its aid was drunk.

Captain Pye, after he severed his connection with Prahran, met with an ill-starred fate, dying of starvation alongside an unfrequented bush road in New Zealand. Other members of the brigade, at a later period, were, Dr. Joseph Taylor, A. Spurr, W. R. Taylor, W. Dicker, Jas. Davies, E. Clark, J. G. Wise and R. Simmons. Dr. Taylor was one of the mainstays of the brigade. He bought the alarm bell, a derelict discarded from a ship. The doctor found the bell in a second-hand dealer's shop. Its clapper tongue was out of order, and unfit to "ring out the wild alarms," but after that defect was remedied, the bell was hung in a look-out tower, where it did duty until 1877 or '78, when the "old tin kettle," as it was called, was removed to the fire brigade station in Osborne Street, South Yarra. The look-out tower referred to was a wooden structure, some 40 feet high, that stood in the Court House yard until it became unsafe and shaky from old age, when it was demolished.

The brigade's first engine-house was at the Prahran Inn, corner of George and Andrew Streets, Windsor, where the engine remained for about eighteen months, when the hotel was burnt down, early

in 1858, the engine having a narrow escape of destruction. Later we find the brigade urging the Council to assist its members in the erection of a suitable engine-house. The brigade's desire was to have the engine-house, as foreshadowed by the Council, adjacent to the Court House. The Government apparently loaned to the brigade a Merryweather manual fire engine, but in 1860 the loan ceased. The engine was for sale. The same thing happened at Richmond, and the two Councils joined in a letter of remonstrance. The protest had no effect, so the Prahran Council purchased the Prahran fire engine for £125/14/3. Some of that amount was obtained by public subscription throughout the district. When superseded by hose and hydrant, the engine was sold to the St. Arnaud Council.

Water was brought in barrels, turned into a canvas tank, and from there pumped on to the fires. The drivers of the first two water carts to arrive were paid 30/- and 20/- each. The most noted of these early water carriers was a character known as "Old Bates," a humourist, who wore a battered belltopper hat. Under the Council's by-law 41 it was an offence for any water carrier to leave his barrels without water during the night, in case water might be required to quench fires. The W. H. Lacey mentioned was chairman of the municipality, 1868-9. In addition, he was the best rifle shot in the district, as well as excelling in other sports. Crews and Lacey held the record for attendance at fires. The two men only missed one during twenty years. On that occasion both were away

at a volunteer encampment. The house burnt down during their absence was that of the then captain of the fire brigade, Captain Lacey himself!

On December 23, 1857, a fire took place in a two-storied wooden house in Vine Street, Windsor, close to Dandenong Road. "A painful scene presented itself," says a contemporary record, "on arrival at the spot, only five minutes after the outbreak. The fire originated in a house occupied by a person named Grocock, and had evidently commenced in the bedroom upstairs. An elderly female, on discovering the fire in the room, threw an infant, which was sleeping in the apartment, out of the window, and she escaped only with her life. The poor woman was immediately conveyed to the Governor Gipps Hotel, and medical aid sought. Small hopes are entertained of her recovery. The flames spread to the house of Mr. Chamberlain. St. Kilda Brigade arrived when the houses were in ruins, the Prahran engine a few minutes after." The woman died. At the inquest it was elicited that she was putting the child to bed, when the window curtains caught alight from a naked light that she was carrying. The fatality, coupled with the late arrival of the brigades, led to an angry newspaper controversy. The letters brought to light the very unsatisfactory conditions under which the volunteers laboured. Their zeal and public spiritedness was admitted, but if a fire was across the boundary of their municipality they would not stir. In some ways the Council was not pleased with the brigade, and in 1871-2 it was reorganised, and brought directly under the control of the Council. Advertisements were inserted for men willing to act.

The Council's annual allowance was £16 per man, the captain £20, 30/- each fire, and 15/- for turning out at a false alarm. The first members of the "reformed" brigade were W. R. Taylor, Joseph Hague, J. Radcliffe, W. H. Wilson, Thos. and James Kelly.

The last man, Captain James Kelly, was one of the finest specimens of pure manhood that ever breathed. In truth, Prahran's Bayard *Le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*. He was schoolmaster, soldier and fireman, and in each capacity was well beloved by his fellows. In September, 1851, he first saw the light, in Balmoral Street, his father, Patrick Kelly, being a Melbourne settler of 1841, and one of the first who came to Prahran. James Kelly died in February, 1891, and was accorded a public funeral, 20,000 people being present to witness the last ceremony, and 55 metropolitan brigades turned out to do honour to the dead knight. Kelly lived just long enough to know that one of the reforms he had persistently advocated in the conduct of fire brigades, a Fire Brigades Board, was accomplished, the first election to that board taking place in February, 1891. By public subscription, a monument, and iron fence in the form of hose and hydrant, were placed over "Jim" Kelly's grave in the St. Kilda Cemetery.

The expenses incurred at the fires for water, etc., were paid by the Council and insurance companies, but only within the municipal boundary. The United Fire Brigades' Committee was in evidence for a time, but it failed to pay the brigades for horse hire, and the brigades had a difficulty to obtain horses on some

occasions to drag the engine to a fire. The roads were heavy, and horse owners were not anxious to volunteer their horses and chance payment for their services from the brigade. This condition of affairs existed for years, and the papers of the sixties and seventies contain many letters denouncing the brigades, their jealousies, and their defaults, while their virtues were overlooked. In later days (1879) fire brigades were formed at South Yarra and Windsor.

We have already said something about the water supply in its first services, the water carts being replaced by the South Yarra Water Works Company. In the Council's opinion, the service supplied by the Company was not in all respects satisfactory. They were two antagonistic bodies. We obtain a glimpse of this in a squabble that arose over the removal of some water pipes in Chapel Street, though why or wherefore the meagre particulars do not disclose. Chapel Road (or Street) was under the control of the Central Road Board, and so was outside the jurisdiction of the Council. In an extreme legal view, any act by the Council on that road was an overt one. The act the Company complained of was done by one of the Council's members. The Company wrote to the chairman of the Central Road Board, Francis Murphy, afterwards Sir Francis, complaining of the high-handed way the Council conducted its business. The Council did not offer its other cheek to the smiter, for when the Road Board wrote in remonstrance, the Council replied to chairman Murphy that every consideration had been shown by the Council to the South Yarra Water Works Company. In addition,



CAPTAIN "JIM" KELLY



J. B. CREWS  
*In Fireman's Uniform*





the councillors stated that they would "take the opportunity of expressing their surprise that the Company that has presented every obstacle to municipal improvements should thus wantonly insinuate to the contrary."

Failing to obtain redress through the Road Board, the chairman of the Water Works Company, William Kerr, wrote direct to the Council, referring to the removal of the Company's pipes in Chapel Street, and asking for a meeting to adjust the dispute. The Council replied in a far-distant, sarcastic vein, in the terse sentence addressed to the Water Company's chairman, as follows:—"The Council is not aware of the existence of any dispute which requires adjusting between themselves and any other body." The reply incensed the Company, as evidently it was so intended. Quick as a shot from a gun came a letter from Kerr, in his capacity as chairman, with the laconic query, "What about the Company's water pipes that were removed?" The Town Clerk was instructed to simply acknowledge the receipt of the letter. The Company then commenced an action against Cr. Oliver, presumably for interfering with its water pipes. The rate-payers sided with the councillor, and on October 4, 1856, a memorial was forwarded to the Council supporting Oliver. A motion was moved by Cr. Crews and carried, expressing the Council's "great surprise at the personal annoyance Cr. Oliver was being subjected to by the Company, and stating that he, Cr. Oliver, carried out the work under the sanction of the Hon. the Surveyor-General, and the authority of the Central Road Board, and that those gentlemen be so informed."

That appears to have been the end of the dispute, though the ill-feeling between the two bodies continued.

In August, 1857, the Council decided to present a memorial to the Commissioner of Water Supply, urging upon him the necessity of supplying such an important district as Prahran with water, since, at the fire that had taken place, the South Yarra Water Supply Company refused to supply water without being paid 2/- a load for it. The following year (1858) saw the first water pipe of the Yan Yean supply enter Prahran, a stand pipe being placed at the corner of Chapel Street and Gardiner's Creek Road. In 1862-3, a main pipe was laid through Chapel Street. The Sewerage and Water Commission informed the Council that it hoped to be able to reticulate the streets of Prahran before the close of the year. In the meantime the Council announced its intention of leasing the stand pipes (there was one in Williams Road), in order to furnish water to the ratepayers at the lowest possible rate.

In other directions, besides supporting its Fire Brigade, looking after the water supply and its corporate dignity, the Council was keen on pushing forward the interests of the municipality. As a corporate body it would brook no neglect of duty on the part of its members. The Council felt that absence of members deprived its deliberations of the saving grace lying in the wisdom of numbers. Not the least important instance of this feeling was in connection with the proposal to erect a bridge across the Yarra at the foot of Chapel Street. The Council was alive to the advantages to be derived from free access to the town. The policy then adopted has been consistently

followed with success ever since. Open roads, the abolition of "blind" streets where possible, connecting bridges, iron linking railway lines, cable tramways, electric tramways, all are the result of the same policy of doing, or welcoming the doing of those acts that will bring business, people and prosperity to Prahran. The necessity of a bridge between Prahran and Richmond loomed very large in 1856. The punts were unsatisfactory, and quite out of keeping with the spirit of progress. The punt at Punt Road, the second oldest on the river, did not affect Prahran, inasmuch as it was at the municipality's extreme north-west corner. In addition to that, the road to the river was so steep that the way was dangerous to travel. But at Chapel Street it only required a bridge, and the necessary approaches from the Richmond bank of the river, to connect the two rising municipalities by a main trade artery. That meant a great increase of traffic along Church and Chapel Streets, so both Councils urged on the Central Road and Bridges Boards the advantages of having the river spanned without delay.

The Prahran Council was looking ahead, too, in another direction. A letter was forwarded to the Board asking that body to inform the Council whether the Government considered Chapel Road—a 66 feet Government Road—a main trunk road, as the Government had promised, as soon as the bridge was completed to make the highway. "At the time of writing," said the Council, "Chapel Road is nearly impassable." The Board was not in any humour to commit itself, for an answer was sent to the Council, saying, politely, that "it must decline to give an opinion as to whether

Chapel Road would or would not be considered a main line of road."

In April, 1856, the sleepless Council told the Central Road Board that "it views with regret the delay of the Central authorities in the erection of a bridge over the Yarra, to connect Chapel Street with Richmond." At last the work was commenced, and a most expensive one it proved to be. The Government had purchased the sections of three iron bridges from the Imperial war authorities. These bridges were built for use in the Crimean War, but peace having been declared, they were not required. One of the bridges is now at Church Street, spanning the Yarra; another at Footscray, crossing the Saltwater, carrying the railway trains, while the third is erected over the Barwon, at Geelong. The sections of the bridge at Church Street were hoisted from the ship's hold into a lighter in Hobson's Bay. The lighter was towed up the River Yarra to Chapel Street, the lighterage fees amounting to £30. A four-horse donkey engine, at a cost of £305, was used for hoisting purposes. Prior to the erection of the bridge, land had to be purchased on the Prahran side of the river. The sums paid were: to Hughes Hicks, £60; to E. J. Murphy, £100; and the excessive sum of £2,000 to Peter Snodgrass. He evidently demanded more, for that sum was arrived at by arbitration, the arbitrator being Dalmahay Campbell, who received £15/15/- for his services. The small piece of land Snodgrass received the £2,000 for was sold at £29 an acre at the Crown lands sales, and was apparently the most northern portion of the section, a barren hill of schistose rock. The Prahran Council

made the road approaches to the bridge from Chapel Street, at a cost of £2,052, that sum being repaid to them by the Central Road Board. An immense amount of scaffolding was employed in the construction of the bridge. The high banks of the river were covered with a net-like covering of wood, to which the fabric of heavy scaffolding was attached. The material for the scaffolding cost £2,054. Other large sums were: Approaches, £3,517; foundations on the Richmond side, £7,677; part of Prahran side, £3,211; abutments, £10,988; for part of approaches, Richmond side, Henry Hill was paid £5,178; wages, £2,241. In all, the total cost of the bridge was £57,000 odd. Such was the hurry to use the bridge that, before the riveting of the sides was finished, traffic was going across.

Cattle were driven in from Gippsland, through Prahran, across the bridge to the Melbourne stock-yards. Anyone caught at such a time crossing the roadway of the bridge, was in danger of being trampled to death, so for public safety outside footbridges were built. The engineering margin of safety of the bridge was not sufficient from the first. Latterly the iron has lost some of its resiliency, and the Prahran Council, in conjunction with the Public Works Department, has taken steps to permanently shore the bridge in such way that its present margin of safety is greater than when first erected. No formal or official opening of the bridge took place. Into the every-day life of the people it came in a quiet way somewhere in October, 1857. The iron sides have been pointed to as having been so built to block the Russian bullets. Such a statement brings imagination nearer to the pomp and

circumstance of war. Doubtless the iron sides would have so served. Bridges were, however, built in such fashion in the fifties. Engineering skill had not discovered that the same or greater strength could be obtained by iron lattice work, while giving a lighter structure. Peace hath its victories no less than war, and that the bridge reached almost the antipodes of its first intended destination is as satisfactory as if the steel intended for swords had been welded into ploughshares.

The dearth of work for the labouring man in 1857 caused keen distress in Prahran. The Council ever took a paternal interest in its ratepayers. When the distress was at an acute stage in the month of September, authority was given to the Town Clerk to employ any number of labourers up to 50 on the streets and roads as the Public Works Committee might indicate. A cheque was drawn also, so that daily payments might be made to the labourers. In casual cases of severe distress the Council relieved pressing necessities. In the event of death, where funds were not available, the Council paid the expenses of the funeral. Some attempts were made, which did not succeed at first, by the local clergymen to enlist the Council's aid in benevolent visiting societies. The Council fought shy of any grants for a while, preferring to do its own almsgiving. The Rev. William Moss suggested the establishment of a benevolent society for the district. Mention of the Prahran Visiting Society crops up now and then, but the Prahran and South Yarra Ladies' Benevolent Society had not come upon the scene. We must wait a few years later before we hear of the



THE REV. WILLIAM MOSS

*Pastor and Philanthropist*

*The First Clergyman in Prahran*

Born at Farnham, Surrey, July 23, 1828.  
Died at Malvern, Victoria, March 14, 1891.





Prahran and South Yarra Ladies' Benevolent Society, with Mrs. Ogilvy as the first secretary. It formed the subject of discussion at the Council meeting of March 30, 1863. Cr. Dickson lodged a motion that the Finance, Legislative and Rates Committee be requested to prepare a by-law whereby the Council may be enabled to vote a sum of money not exceeding £150 per year to the Society, or any other society of a similar kind, now in existence, or that may be hereafter formed, for distribution to the deserving poor residents within the municipality. The motion was defeated by an amendment wherein the Council affirmed the opinion that the donation of any portion of its funds would prevent the present voluntary contributions being continued to the same or fuller extent. As a sop to the Society, the Council expressed its willingness to grant free the use of the hall, and that individually the councillors would assist the Society. Some time afterwards the Council altered its policy, and devoted sums to charity, which practice has been continued to the present day.

No doubt eleemosynary guilds were active in the fifties amongst the churches, when their poorer members were in want of help. Prahran was, dull or good times, all the while forging ahead. The Council was carrying out permanent works as fast as its funds would permit. The changes wrought then were more evident than improvement would be to-day. The Councillors were dealing with almost virgin conditions. Every change was an improvement, whereas to-day an improvement may only be a change in the direction of beauty, and not dire necessity and welcome utility, as

was mostly the ease in the first days of the municipality.

The churches and their pastors kept pace with the progressive movement. Religion was regarded by the early men as "the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and all comfort," to quote Burke's words, and the amount of money the small community freely subscribed to erect churches puts to the blush the men who worship, or do not attend to worship in those same churches to-day. One of the most liberal of those congregations was the Independents. Whether because of their pastor's personality or not, their works showed the faith strong within them. The first Independent Congregational Chapel, the little chapel that gave its name to Prahran's principal business street, was under the pastorship of the Rev. William Moss. Though long since erased from Chapel Street, yet its memory still remains in some recollections as the building in which much that has since proved to be for Prahran's welfare was started or brought to fruition. Not only was the chapel used for spiritual affairs, but when the temporal wants of the community were at issue, the little chapel's doors stood open for the general weal of the community. 'Twas there, in April, 1854, that the meeting was held in which Peter Zohrab figures so prominently as a sort of municipal Moses, to lead the men of Prahran out of the Sloughs of Despond, and give them a corporate individuality where union would be strength. The man whose mind was broad enough, and free enough from sectarian bias to so throw open the doors of God to the welfare of man was quite a

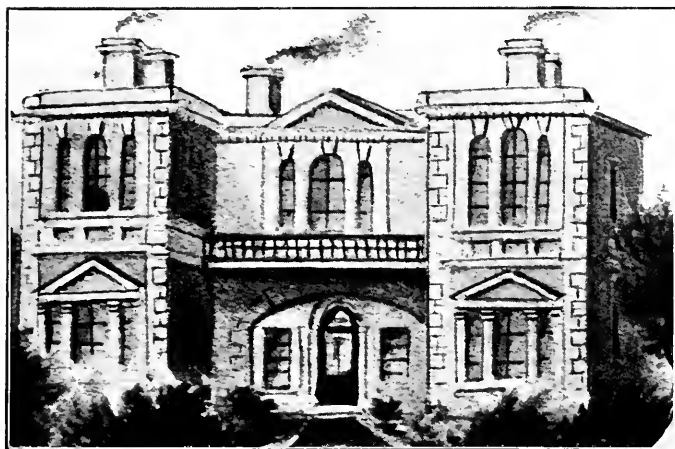
young clergyman, but he was full of potentialities, which each year only made more manifest.

The Rev. William Moss came to Prahran in 1852, and on his arrival his appearance was somewhat out of keeping with the primitive surroundings. He is described as a straight, well-proportioned fellow, wearing a frock coat, a black belltopper hat, and white necktie; fair in complexion, with large, deep, thoughtful blue eyes, gentle in manner, and soft in speech. In the beginning of October, 1852, he was ordained to the pastoral charge of Prahran. The Rev. W. Jarrett opened the service; the Rev. W. P. Scott read the address, and the Rev. T. O'Dell asked the customary questions, and delivered the ministerial charge. In the evening, a Mr. Blair preached to the people. "The attendance," says a contemporary report, "was numerous and respectable (!), and in the intervals between the services a tea meeting was held in a tent erected for that purpose. The church is recorded to number 27 members, and that already the brick building recently erected was found to be much too small for the congregation in attendance."

The young pastor, with earnest ways and magnetic attraction, soon drew the people in unto him. In 1853 the church was enlarged at a cost of £2,000, the whole sum required being fully subscribed by his enthusiastic flock shortly afterwards. The first persons to be married in the church, and probably in a Prahran church, were Thomas Blackwell and Miss Fanny Craven. The lady was the daughter of Mr. Craven, Prahran's pioneer Town Clerk, a lovable man also, who was in his life, when sere in the leaf, generally

referred to as "Dear old John Craven." At that time a grocer's shop, kept by James Storey, was next door to the church, and from there to the north-east corner of Commercial Road was six acres of vacant and swampy land. Chapel Road was roughly formed with red gum planking edging the side walks. When it rained heavily the roadway was flooded, and the storm waters could be heard roaring in the numerous gullies.

Five years afterwards yet another change was made to meet the ever-growing population, with its expanding faith in God. As the fruits of that belief, on Monday, November 22, 1858, the foundation stone of the Independent Church, in Commercial Road, was laid by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B. The day was a blazing one, with a fierce hot wind, and no protection was afforded from the sun's rays. Quite in keeping with Prahran's early history something untoward happened. What the press of the day describes as "an attempt at a platform broke down during the ceremony, causing His Excellency, several clergymen, reporters and other persons to come rather hurriedly to the ground." Fortunately the platform was not more than three feet high. The services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Moss and Rev. Mr. Thomas. Mr. Moss stated that the Old Independent Chapel was the first place of worship erected in the suburbs of Melbourne. When, however, the gold discoveries attracted a large population to Victoria, the building was enlarged, but now it was necessary to



THE FIRST DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION, COMMERCIAL RD.  
*Afterwards used as an Asylum for the Blind—Leal House*



PRAHRAN TOWN HALL AND COURT HOUSE  
*(About 1862)*  
*Side View from Greville Street*



build again. The following is a copy of the scroll placed beneath the foundation stone:—

“The foundation stone of this building, for the use of the Prahran Independent Church and congregation, was laid by His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., Governor-in-Chief of Victoria, on November 22, 1858, the Rev. T. Bunney, of London, taking part in the proceedings. Pastor of the Church, Rev. Mr. Moss; Deacons, Messrs. J. Craven, J. Dunn, B. Hick, J. Stokes, T. G. James, J. S. Mortimer and R. T. Blackwell; Trustees, Messrs. F. J. Sargood, Thos. Fulton, Robert Smith, J. Craven, J. Dunn, B. Hick, J. Stokes, T. G. James, J. S. Mortimer and R. T. Blackwell; Architects, Messrs. Crouch and Wilson; Builder, John Young.”

The Rev. Mr. Moss during his pastorate there received a further call to aid suffering humanity. In 1859 a letter in the *Argus* suggested the necessity of a school for deaf mutes. The proposal met with no support from the Government or the public, but, nevertheless, a deaf mute, Mr. F. J. Rose, who had been educated in London, started a school in Windsor with twelve scholars. Mr. Moss took a warm interest in their welfare, and that of the school. The latter was first held in Peel Street (1860), in Henry Street (1861), and then in Nelson Street (1862), Windsor. In 1864 the school was removed to Commercial Road. For 30 years Mr. Moss was the honorary secretary of the institution. The foundation stone of the building on St. Kilda Road was laid on March 6, 1866.

When the Commercial Road building was vacated the newly formed Institute for the Blind occupied it. At first the intention was to have the mutes and the blind together in one institution. That idea was abandoned and two separate committees formed out of the original committee in favour of the assistance to the mutes. The Rev. James Mirams was the author of

the idea, and to him belongs the honour of founding the Institute for the Blind. Mr. Moss was foremost in both efforts, but the Deaf and Dumb Institution was the one he was more intimately connected with, and it suffered a great loss by his death, on March 14, 1891.

The building—Leal House—in Commercial Road associated with these philanthropic efforts originally belonged to William Murray Ross. That extraordinary mortal, in some respects a visionary, and in other ways a keen business man, came from Liverpool to Prahran in 1852. When he walked down Chapel Road with J. C. Holland, who is hale to-day, there were only three stores, all flying flags to indicate their vicinity. One of the stores was kept by Dawborn, the “Blue Bell,” which has already been referred to. Dawborn was a Liverpool man, and the two townies fraternised. As a result, Ross thought highly of Prahran as a coming place. In pursuance of that belief he purchased 14 acres of land in Malvern Road, and erected a two-storied house near the Bush Inn. It was opposite the defunct Hawksburn Hotel, that afterwards became Graham Berry’s residence, but is now a private school.

Ross was secretary of the Liverpool, London and Globe Insurance Company, and before coming to Melbourne bearing the highest credentials from business men in Liverpool, he had taken a prominent part in the movement for the expansion of dock accommodation. On May 19, 1862, he applied to the Council for permission to open up a street from Williams Road to York Street, which permission was granted, the street in question to-day being known as Murray Street. His



last visionary quixotic idea, because, perhaps, before its time, was the erection of a mill to crush sugar beet, and the laying down of a railway to the mill. That venture proved his financial ruin, but he left his name written across the district in which he made the attempt, viz., Rosstown. He was a queer looking little fellow in later years, with an absolutely bald head and spider-like legs; his pate full, as we have said, of visions that, owing to some flaw or lesion, were destined never to be realised.

In 1857 the Methodist Chapel was in Commercial Road; the Independent Chapel, in Chapel Street; the Wesleyan Schoolroom, the Scotch Schoolroom, in Sargood Street (Orrong Road); the Baptist Chapel, Charles Street; the Windsor Schoolroom, the Windsor Catholic Schoolroom, and the Church of England Schoolroom, Chapel Street. With the exception of the last and the Independent Chapel, they do not loom up largely in the early history of Prahran, though they did, as also did the others that came after them, discharge well their spiritual functions to their respective adherents. The Presbyterian Church was at the corner of High Street and Punt Road, the mause to the same being known as "The Cabin," tenanted by the Rev. Jas. Megand. The Anglicans were very much in evidence. St. Matthew's Church was first established in a cottage in Chapel Street, about opposite Osment buildings, and close to where Dr. Llewellyn's four-roomed cottage used to stand. The first baptism took place on January 24, 1854, the infant son of John Lythgoe, carpenter, and Mary, his wife, being christened Joseph. Afterwards the Anglicans crossed

the road. According to the *Church of England Messenger*, their official paper, the Prahran Anglican Church "is even now (1859) incurring the scorn of more energetic bodies of religionists." For some reason or other the first Prahran Anglicans were slow in movement, and dilatory in providing the funds for church building. Considerable delay, that led to heart burnings and unchristian-like dissensions, took place. Eventually a piece of land in Chapel Street, on the site where Osment buildings now stand, was procured, having a frontage of 100 feet to a right-of-way leading from High Street. A devout Anglican, a tinsmith, named Hague, is credited with having found the purchase money or given the land.

The schoolroom was built, and when ready was also used as a church, a double purpose reminding one of Oliver Goldsmith's lines—

"The chest contrived a double debt to pay,  
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day."

and one that the Government did not approve. Neither did the Anglican authorities, but the parishioners would not find the money for a church. In May (1859) the church vestry was so angered that it took the extraordinary step of indicating the defaulters on church door, and each pew, in an indirect but efficient manner. About £180 was overdue for pew rents. According to the Vestry's half-yearly report, "they placed a notice on the doors of the building, and also on the seats, containing a nominal return of seat holders who had paid their seat rents from June 30, 1858, to '59." Those who had not paid were highly incensed at what they denounced as "strong measures." The *Church of*

*England Messenger* had a tilt at the tardy parishioners, urging them "to exchange a schoolroom, with its maps and music boards, its inky desks and wainscots chalked over with square root and vulgar fractions for the fretted aisle and mullioned window and other features more consonant with devout recollections." The Government had granted £200 towards the erection of the schoolhouse, and £100 was subscribed by the residents. Mr. Gamble, who is still alive, a retired officer of the Education Department, was its first schoolmaster. The first minister to officiate in the schoolroom as a church was the Rev. James D. Brennan, who was appointed, January, 1854. He was followed by the Rev. F. G. Barton, and the Rev. E. Puckle, who was succeeded, on May 4, 1855, by the Rev. J. H. Gregory.

The lack of a suitable church was felt, and several meetings were held to devise means to collect money to build one. One of the most practical and important took place on July 25, 1861, when it was resolved to proceed with the erection of a Church of England in Commercial Road. A piece of land was purchased by subscription for £200, in the names of Messrs. Dumas, White, Crews, Watt, and Smith, as trustees. When the land was secured, a section of the Anglicans held that the site was too near that belonging to the Independents. Complaint was made, too, that the Independents' powerful organ would drown the songs of praise from the Anglican choir! Thereupon it was decided to sell the land. Then some unchristian-like dissensions arose amongst the trustees. Dumas refused to allow the land to be sold unless he was paid £134, an amount, he

said, he was out of pocket after the purchase. That caused further delay. At last, in high indignation, the Anglicans paid the money. Afterwards they purchased, for £250, a site 102 by 138 feet, in Chapel Street, near Pine Street, "the nearest that could be procured to Commercial Road, and about equal distances from the three churches of the parish." Then they looked forward to the day when they would have a fine church, which they determined should be called St. Matthew's. At that time the church authorities summed up the situation, so far as subscriptions were concerned, with the words: "It must not be overlooked that the population of Prahran, though dense, is for the most part not of the wealthy class."

In December, 1876, the land in Chapel Street, and the school, were sold by public auction by E. J. Dixon, the purchaser being Henry Osment, the land bringing £30 per foot. He was then the proprietor of the Prahran *Telegraph* newspaper, his father, who bought the news sheet from Howard Spensley, being dead. Afterwards he entered the Council and became Mayor, the mayoral ball of his year being remembered for its magnificence, it being the first ball held in the "City," i.e., the new Town Hall. A section of the Anglicans was greatly opposed to the sale of the schoolroom, and letters appeared in the local press from irate parishioners. They declared it was vandalism to dismantle such a building, hallowed by the early memories of those who had learnt their letters there, and who afterwards, reaching manhood, held communion there with all that was good. The protests passed unheeded. In due course the land in High

Street was bought, and a wooden structure was erected standing back from the street, the foundation stone of St. Matthew's being laid by Bishop Perry, in September, 1877. St. Matthew's was built, and when finished was heavily in debt. The church was opened for services in July, 1878, the first incumbent being the late Bishop Henry A. Langley. He had not been informed of the church's debt, £5,000, and when he learnt of the amount he was so disheartened that he left his boxes unpacked for weeks. The parishioners, however, rallied about him, and the debt was discharged.

The Rev. J. S. Gregory went afieid, and was instrumental in building All Saints. In August, 1860, the "building was progressing favourably. The stone work," says a report, "of a portion at present in hand is nearly finished, and it is understood that the trustees hope to make arrangements for putting on the skeleton of the roof, not including the slates." Although the church is outside Prahran, it was intended to take the place of the schoolroom in Chapel Street, but it was soon found that two churches were required. For some time the Anglicans of Prahran used the Town Hall as a place of worship. The site of All Saints was presented by the Government to the Anglican authorities on July 25, 1855. The first services were held in it while in an unfinished condition, and worshippers had to bring their own seats. In April, 1862, All Saints was dedicated to the service of God. Other Anglican churches in Prahran are: St. John's, Toorak; Christ Church, South Yarra, just over the Punt Road boundary, one of the oldest Anglican churches in Victoria; and St. Alban's, Armadale. The site of St. John's

Church was purchased by the members of the church, March 12, 1860. The church was opened for service at the end of 1862, the Rev. Dr. Bromby officiating therein until the arrival from England of the first incumbent, the Rev. Walter Fellows, M.A., October 12, 1863. He was the brother of Judge Fellows, famous for his roses, if not for his law, while he, himself, was equally famous in the cricketing field.

The land on which Christ Church, South Yarra, the school, and the vicarage are built (two acres) was granted by the Government to the Anglican authorities on February 11, 1851. The reason why so many churches are on the west side of Punt Road is that the land there was all the Government had left to grant in the vicinity of Prahran. Portion of Christ Church was opened in February, 1857, service having been previously held in the schoolroom from the date (November 29, 1855) of the appointment of the Rev. W. W. Guinness, who was the first minister officiating at South Yarra.

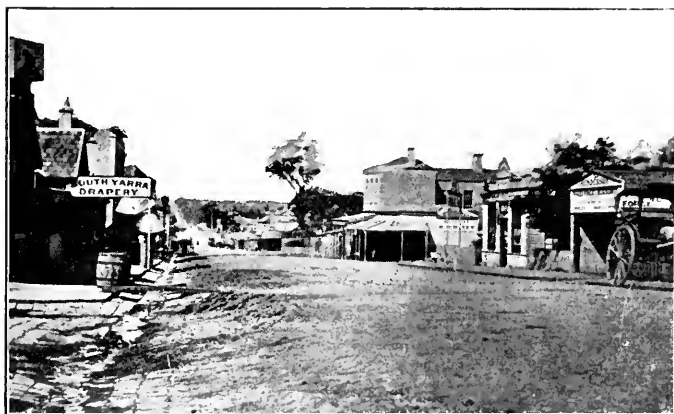
The site of St. Alban's Church, at the corner of Wynnstay and Orrong Roads, was purchased by the Diocesan authorities in March, 1885. The temporary church was opened by Bishop Moorhouse, in September, 1885, and the permanent church on June 17, 1899, by Bishop Goe. The first minister was the Rev. Frederick Webb, now of Adelaide.

St. Martin's, at Cromwell Road, Hawksburn, is another Anglican Church of recent date. Its foundation stone was laid in 1887. The Rev. Horace Tucker acted as incumbent for a while, and he was succeeded by the Rev. W. Kennedy Brodribb.

In the fifties the Roman Catholics had their spiritual needs attended to by the Rev. P. Niall, whose parish extended from Prahran to Brighton. The St. Joseph's Mission, at South Yarra, is a modern parish. The Government gave the church a grant of land situated in Punt Road, near Commercial Road, quite out of the way so far as the convenience of worshippers was concerned. This the church authorities sold for £5,000, and a site was purchased in Fitzgerald Street. The foundation stone of St. Joseph's was laid, March 18, 1888; in 1892 the building was enlarged, and a school hall erected capable of accommodating over 400 children, the whole of the improvements costing £2,200. The parish of St. Joseph's, in ten years, has subscribed £10,700 towards the church, inclusive of the £5,000 obtained from the sale of the land. The Presentation Convent, at Windsor, was founded by five Presentation Nuns, who arrived in Prahran, from the Mother-house, in Limerick, on Sunday, December 21, 1873. On December 10, 1874, they moved into a house that stood in the present convent grounds, which cost £2,600. Schools were erected, and a substantial brick wall, at a cost of £2,000. Ten years afterwards a permanent convent was decided upon. The Rev. Dr. Corbett, laid the foundation stone on October 28, 1883, and it was opened in September of the following year. The convent is a hollow rectangle, the outside measurements being 176 by 140 feet, and the architectural style employed is a picturesque treatment of the early pointed, with the usual high-pitched roofs and cross-surmounted gables. The cost of the completed portion of the convent amounted to £9,000.

In other directions, Prahran has seen some religious revival movements and temperance crusades, notably that of Matthew Burnett, who made many converts to temperance for the time being. His superficial success was wonderful. By his eloquence he stirred up the whole of Prahran. A Minister of the Crown, the late Hon. J. Nimmo, appeared on his platform in the vacant places of the city. The earnest face of the crusader was enlightened by the flames of flare oil lamps. In the end, Burnett was accorded the honour of a torchlight procession through the city, the members of several fire brigades lending their aid! His magnetic personality caused hundreds and hundreds to sign the pledge, under the spell of his pathetic pleading for home and bairns, and his denunciation of drink, but not the drunkard, who he depicted as a poor soul gripped by the potent devil lurking in drink. Later came Major Barker, of the Salvation Army. About 1876 he landed, with his wife, from London. The two set out, full of faith, unassisted, to establish the Salvation Army in Australia, and these street missionaries made their first essay in Prahran. Major Barker was an earnest worker, and he succeeded in his labour, only to be recalled to London when the heat and burden of the day had passed. The first Salvation Army barracks ever built in Australia was the outcome of his work. It stands in Victoria Street, Windsor, and was opened by Major Barker on May 2, 1884, the Mayor of Prahran, Cr. G. W. Taylor, being present.





GARDINER'S CREEK ROAD, LOOKING EAST, IN THE SIXTIES

*The Street on the left is Ralston Street*



GARDINER'S CREEK ROAD, LOOKING WEST, IN THE SIXTIES



## CHAPTER XI.

PRAHRAN GAZETTED A TOWN—PRAHRAN RACING CLUB—PENNY READINGS — FIRST QUADRILLE ASSEMBLY — THE SOUTHERN RIFLES—A RATING APPEAL—FURIOUS MUNICIPAL STORM—COUNCILLOR CREWS RETIRES.

AN Act of Parliament was passed in 1863 that was known as the "Municipal and Local Corporation Act," by virtue of which all municipalities became boroughs, and the chairmen were entitled to be designated Mayors. Cr. Crews enjoyed the distinction of being the first Mayor of Prahran, October 1, '63. The year preceding 1863 all property depreciated in value, and Prahran, like other places, suffered from the financial depression. In this year the value of properties, which in 1860 had been £114,000, fell to £86,000. In 1864 it had fallen to £85,555. Then the country's prospects brightened up to 1870, when the next memorable step in the history of Prahran occurred. An Act was passed, in 1869, known as the "Boroughs' Statute." This Act provided, *inter alia*, that any borough, the total income of which exceeded £10,000 per annum, might, on petition to the Governor-in-Council, be gazetted a town. Such was kept in remembrance by the Council, and in May, 1870, Cr. Robert Murray Smith, being Mayor, the Council petitioned the Governor for permission to rank as a town. The petition was granted, and Prahran was the first amongst all its neighbours to be gazetted a town by virtue of

the Act of 1869, its valuation being in that year £109,000, and its total income £14,198. The proclamation of township did not cause the townspeople to light bonfires or give expression to any outward forms of rejoicing. Indeed, if we can judge from the tone of the *Telegraph*, the official nativity was looked at with eyes askance. "If it is an honour at all," said the journal, "it is a very barren one. They" (the townspeople) "have, at any rate, this to console themselves with that they are the *first* who have claimed the privilege, and it would not greatly surprise us if they were to be the last. . . . We cannot congratulate the borough on a change that seems to have been made for the mere sake of change." Other days, other views—Prahran thought differently when the place was proclaimed a city. Prahran, notwithstanding the paper's ill-placed gibe, was progressing in material ways, and also civic importance clothed in becoming apparel, for three years before the Council authorised the Mayor to obtain robes of office, August 19, 1867, to suitably represent the town on the occasion of the Duke of Edinburgh's visit. The mayoral chain was to come later.

In the sixties, almost all the municipalities around Melbourne numbered residents who were enthusiastic enough sports to promote race meetings. One club was established at St. Kilda, and Prahran was not long in having one of its own. The hack races, held before at Mount Erica, were not seriously regarded as having anything in common with the "sport of kings." The Prahran Club held its meeting at the end of the year, and the first took place on December 29 and 30 (two

days' racing), 1865. William Jupp, "on behalf of the stewards," had written to the Council for permission to use its five-acre reserve, which the Council granted, though an invitation to send a donation was declined, on the grounds of misappropriation of funds. The stewards of the Prahran Racing Club were G. Gunn, W. Jupp, W. Slack, W. B. White, and H. L. Wartman. The men who ran horses at the meeting were Kelly, Miley, Frigatt, McKans, Cuthbertson, Glasscock, Robertson, Hughes, Crompton, Trotter, Wartman, Sewell, A. Smith, George Watson, Tucker, Bowes and Fenwick. Two of the jockeys mentioned as riding were Tyrrell and Johnson. The location of the racing track was advertised as on the ground bounded by the St. Kilda, Punt and Commercial Roads, and the reserve of the new Wesley College. A newspaper report records that the number of visitors was large, notwithstanding the first day was stormy and threatening. The first day's list of races may have a quaint interest to sports of another generation, since the Prahran Racing Club, with its course extending over the site of the Alfred Hospital, is one of the things of the past that will not be repeated. The events were four in number.

## FIRST RACE.

## Maiden Plate.

Of 15 sovs. Entrance £1 10s. Weight-for-age. About one mile and a half.

1. Brunette.
2. Rochester.
3. Rose of Holstein.

## Publicans' Purse.

Of 10 sovs. Entrance 1 sov. Twice Round. Weight-for-age.

1. Cardigan.
2. Spider.

## Prahran Handicap.

Of 30 sovs. Entrance 3 sovs. About two miles and a half.

1. Mozart.
2. Caledonia.
3. Polly Peacham.

The afternoon's sports concluded with a hack race of 5 sovs. The report is silent on the subject of odds, whether bookmakers were present, and other particulars which we would at this date fain know.

In another field of sport, football, the South Yarra Club was a power in the land, and the district had the honour of holding the Challenge Cup for some time, a trophy that was much coveted. The club, however, lost it to Melbourne at the end of July, 1865. A great crowd assembled to see the battle for supremacy between the two clubs. The sports had strange ways in those days. Though the two teams were on the ground in the Jolimont paddock, play was delayed for half an hour, owing to Captain O'Mullane's lengthy harangue to his team as to how they were to play. We are told further, that every half hour, consultations were held with Hammill, the coach of the team, as to the best tactics to be followed. *Bell's Life in Victoria*, the sporting newspaper of the day, publishes a long description of the game. The following extract shows how doughy were the district boys in days of old. "More stubborn play," says the report, "was never seen; rushes, scrimmages and charges followed each other in quick succession, and cheers and counter cheers, by both players and spectators, at any extraordinary feat of pluck or skill, all parties entering most earnestly into the spirit and excitement of the game. We cannot

omit to mention one special rush that took place just opposite to the entrance to the cricket ground, so fiercely and determinedly did the men meet that the ground almost shook with the charge, and the ball was on several occasions so fairly kicked at at the same moment by two players, that the thud was heard all over the field, and the opposing parties were sent to mother earth with such force that it seemed quite a relief to see them resume."

There was no gate money in those days, nor professional footballers; the men contested for the honour and glory of the district, and the district was proud of its champions, who answered to the names of Grey (3), Ogilvie, O'Mullane, Balcone, Freeman, Wright, Green, Thomas, Murray, Budd, Powell, Smyth, Bromby, Desailly, Willan, Snodgrass, Lester and Murphy.

Fawkner Park was the club's location, a reserve that was for years afterwards the scene of many a good Saturday afternoon's sport. The matches were played in front of the Alfred Hospital, before there were trees, fences and tree guards to interfere with the game. The South Yarra Cricket Club has already been mentioned. A club that arose about the same time was the Fawkner Park Cricket Club, the president being Major Snowball; vice-president, T. Donaldson; treasurer, —. Waters.

The desire for recreation among the older men of Prahran was also made manifest in the year 1864, for it saw the formation of the first bowling club in the colony, viz., the Melbourne Bowling Club, the members of which had leased land at Windsor, beside the railway station. The opening day was October 22, when there

were 182 members upon the books. The officers were: Matthew Hervey, president; H. N. C. Gemmell, vice-president; J. S. Butters, John Everard, A. C. Fox, J. S. Miller, directors; John Campbell, hon. sec. At the first annual meeting it was stated that the plant and wages bill amounted to £229/11/4, the amount of the club's liability, £72. The assets were a ten years' lease and improvements. The intention to erect a suitable pavilion in the ensuing year was foreshadowed, and the members were congratulated by the president on their great success in introducing the ancient game of bowls into the colony. In connection with the club, the game of quoits was also played; indeed, all over Prahran quoits was a favourite pastime. One of such clubs played in Fawkner Park; amongst its members were some well-known names, viz., Moss, Willis, Waters, Martin, Briggs, Loughrey, Basan, Cochrane, Patterson, McMahon, Crook, Reyes. In 1865, after nine months' play, the Melbourne green, lying dead in the winter, was closed to all except quoiters. Several highly interesting matches were played, if we are to believe contemporary reports, especially one played in July, 1865, which was called the "Grand Subscription Handicap," in which J. S. Butters, afterwards Mayor of Melbourne, and always more or less associated with the municipal and social life of Prahran, was the hero and victor of the hour. His opponent was a club member named Robertson. The Melbourne Bowling Club was somewhat on what is termed, for lack of a better description, the "aristocratic" side, and therefore it was not surprising that the more horny-handed sons of Prahran felt that they would like a club of their own.



This club was duly established, its first president being Cr. J. B. Crews, and the club was called the Prahran Bowling Club. A well-known resident, Andrew Izett, leased and lent some land to the members, and the club's first location was in Izett Street, and the day of its opening was September 16, 1865.

Beyond these outdoor sports, great interest was taken by the residents in musical societies, the Prahran Philharmonic Society holding a leading place amongst musical societies of Melbourne. In addition, there were glee and madrigal clubs, lectures were very popular, while entertainments of the magic lantern class were frequent. The penny readings were, however, the great feature in the intellectual recreations of Prahran life at this time. Frequently the Town Hall was not half large enough to contain the number of persons who sought to gain admission. Some prominent man generally gave the reading; on one occasion it was the Hon. Charles Gavan Duffy. A pianoforte solo opened the proceedings, a favourite performer being Miss S. Heckseher. At one penny reading Mr. Martin delivered some lines, in which he endeavoured to explain the phenomenal success of the readings—

“If here by chosen specimens you learn  
The beauties in each author to discern,  
Tennyson's songs, Macaulay's gorgeous prose,  
Sam Weller's jokes or Araminta's woes,  
The tender pathos or the wit of Hood,  
That smiling Martyne too late understood.”

And much more to the same effect on to the grand finale—

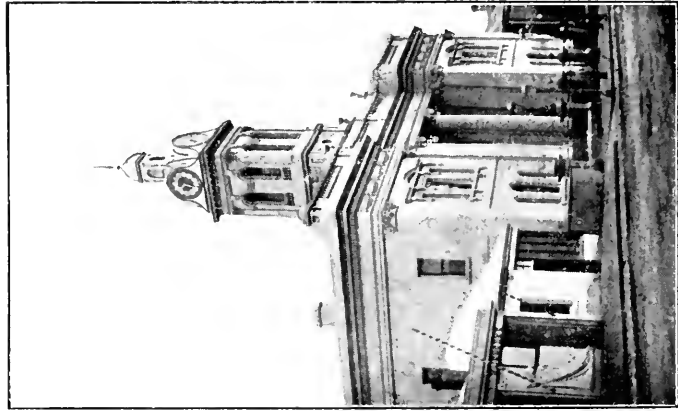
“We triumphed then in spite of many fears,  
And through this season till our closing years,  
May the success with which they first began,  
Attend the Penny Readings of Prahran.”

Unfortunately the men who managed the penny readings introduced into the entertainment "turns" of a variety hall nature. The result was that many "vulgar little boys" would not listen to the readings of the pearls of literature after a clog dance, but gayed the readers. An effort was made to keep the boys out by increasing the price of admission from one penny to threepence, but that failed, and the penny readings, after two or three fitful attempts to regain their initial popularity, flickered out.

A love of nature also asserted its claim to recognition, the Local Horticultural Society sprung into existence, and some creditable exhibitions of the beauty lying in the Prahran mother earth, when dressed, combed and coaxed, were shown. Indeed, so far did the skill of these amateur gardeners go, that public lustre was shed upon Prahran horticulture by a par. in the papers. Most country places boast of their prize pumpkins or colossal mangel-wurzel, but it was left for Prahran to grow and exhibit the apple that held the record at the date of its growth, in the colony of Victoria. The fruit would require some beating even to-day. Lest it should be thought we are claiming too much, let the *Age* paragraph, dated March 17, 1866, speak—

"We were shown a monstrous apple, of the sort known as the Emperor Alexander, on Monday. It measured 15 inches in circumference, and weighed 18 ozs. It was grown by Mr. Atkinson, of Nelson Street, Prahran."

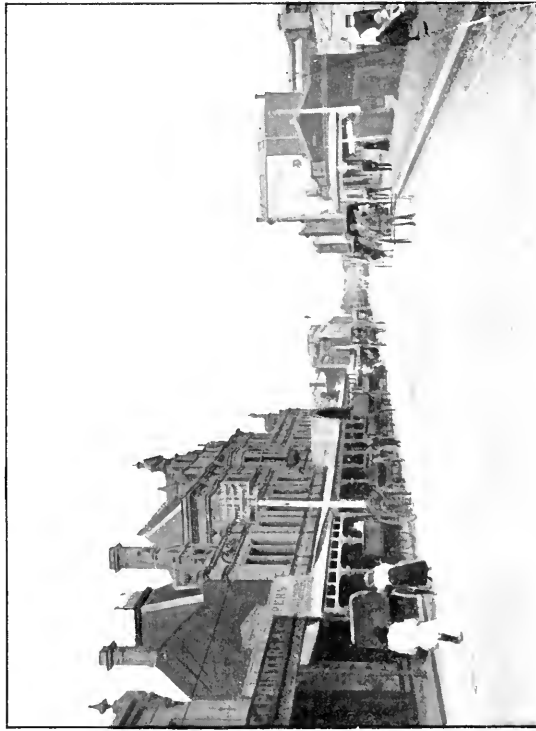
Dancing assemblies, too, were numerous. The first public dance held in Prahran dates back to the early fifties, and was held in the Royal George Hotel, James Mason, licensee. Mason, as proprietor of this Prahran



PRAHRAN TOWN HALL

About 1862

*Showing Iron Pillside, Shuttered Building, with  
Clock in Tower*



COMMERCIAL ROAD AND MARKET BUILDING

*On the site of a reclaimed swamp. The road shows  
a modern compressed rock asphalt thoroughfare.*



historical tavern, decorated the rooms in an expensive manner. The bar ceiling was covered with heavy ornamental plaster work. The room above ran the whole length of the building, Chapel Street frontage. The walls were most elaborately papered in red and gold. Amongst the dancers who are remembered to have been present on the occasion were Mr. and Mrs. Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. Romanis, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, and Mrs. Mason herself, who is ungallantly enough declared to have weighed weighty. The beginning of the evening pointed to a most successful inauguration of the opening night of the Prahran Quadrille Assembly, but it was doomed in a minor sort of way to echo an historical parallel. We may say, as Byron wrote, in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"—

"The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men,  
A thousand (?) hearts beat happily, and when  
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,  
And all went merry as a marriage bell,  
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell."

The noise, however, was something more than a deep "sound." It was a roaring crash, mingled with the sound of falling bottles and smashing glass, and loud oaths from the licensee. He could be heard by the astonished and terrified dancers, cursing, down stairs. And he had reason. The dancing up stairs had caused the floor to shake the heavy plaster mouldings from off the bar ceiling, and the plaster had crashed down, bringing bottles off the shelves and striking customers. The bar was wrecked, the company having, literally, danced the ceiling down. When Mason reached the upper rooms he was white with rage and

vexation. The incident put an end to the Prahran Quadrille Assembly so far as the Royal George was concerned, while it afforded food for mirth at Mason's expense for some time.

Another relaxation, with an utilitarian side, that found favour with Prahran men, was the volunteer movement. The Prahran Council assisted the volunteers with money, and a corps was established in 1859. In May, 1860, Captain Lesley Moody, officer commanding the South Yarra and Prahran Rifle Corps, asked the Council to donate £50 towards the cost of erecting butts which were proposed to be placed in Orrong Road, to the north of Gardiner's Creek Road. That suggestion was, however, quashed by the secretary, Captain O. F. Timms, of the Governor, writing to the Council, stating that Captain Pitt was of the opinion that the site suggested was not a suitable place for rifle butts, in which His Excellency concurred. In August of the same year the Council agreed to lend the Court House to the volunteers as an Orderly Room, but it was too small for the purpose. On December 30, 1861, the South Yarra Volunteer Artillery Regiment solicited a money grant from the Council in aid of funds for the erection of an Orderly Room. The Council granted the requirement, £20, and an Orderly Room was erected in Osborne Street. By some mismanagement or other the regiment became involved, and the building was sold to satisfy the mortgagees. The Council, hearing that a sale had been effected, requested a return of the £20 it had donated, but the secretary of the regiment wrote in a churlish manner that the regiment refused to refund the money, as

the sale of material would only allow the payment of a few debts incurred. The councillors thereupon expressed their determination that for the future the Council would not donate any sums of money otherwise than for permanent works. In 1862 the local military body had become the Prahran and South Yarra Volunteers. The butts were at the seashore, somewhere in the vicinity of the Beaconsfield Parade, and applications cropped up for the assistance of the Council in making a footbridge over the swamp, the Albert Lake, so as to save the riflemen long detours. An unpleasant incident happened in March, 1864, which led the parties concerned to fight the issue out in the law courts. The Sheriff of the colony, Claud Farie, who has figured before in these pages, by what was termed "back stairs influence," was appointed to command the Prahran and South Yarra Rifle Corps. In the appointment of non-commissioned officers he over-rode in a most arbitrary manner the wishes of the members of the corps. A special meeting was held, and Farie's action was freely and adversely discussed.

Private Rea sent a report to the *Herald*, in which Farie did not appear in too flattering a light. On the next parade, Farie charged Rea with sending the report, and he admitted doing so. Farie flew into a furious passion, ordered Rea under arrest, and had him deprived of his arms and accoutrements. This scandalous treatment of Rea aroused the wrath of the public. The authorities endeavoured to satisfy the volunteers by the appointment of a Military Court, consisting of Captains Brewer, Woolley and Moule, to inquire into the question as how far the discipline of the force was

effected by the occurrence. Rea, on his part, was to charge Captain Farie before Colonel Anderson with conduct unbecoming a gentleman. All this was felt by the force to be but a begging of the issue, and it was urged that the Supreme Court was the proper tribunal, free from bias, in which to try the case; Rea, in the end, launched a writ, charging Farie with false imprisonment. Rea lost his action, some technical mistake having been made in his pleadings. Judge Barry, apart from that, gave it as his opinion that the corps had no power to nominate for temporary appointments.

On December 20, 1865, the corps consisted of 145 men, 140 of whom were effective, and the earning capacity of the company was about £400. The officers were: Lieutenants Black and Chambers, Sergeants Tilley and Hitchcock, Corporal Wilson, Privates Hackerty and Batchelor, Drill Instructor Jean. At that date, a large quantity of timber had been promised the corps by the Government for an Orderly Room. Early in the following year the Governor-in-Council was pleased to direct that the Prahran and South Yarra Rifle Corps be henceforth known as the Prahran and South Yarra or Southern Rifles. The latter name was the one that survived. In July, 1866, the Council granted the north-east corner of the Recreation Reserve, corner of Punt Road and Commercial Road, 100 by 200 feet, to the Southern Rifles, for an Orderly Room. The Rev. J. S. Waugh, the pastor of the Wesley Church, opposite, objected to the room, as being too close to his church, but the Council said the land had been given. The room was erected, and still stands.



It cost the corps £1,000, which was paid out of the Government allowance. Some time afterwards, when the Police Court at the Town Hall, which had been used as an Orderly Room, was being pulled down, Captain Farie claimed the material, under a promise the Council had given him two years before, that the wood was to be given to the corps. The Council replied that the former Council had acted *ultra vires*, that the material there was of no appreciable value, that it was given for a special purpose, which had been carried out without its use, that the material had since acquired a value, and, finally, that the Council did not feel justified in giving away the property of the Corporation. That settled the claim of Captain Farie.

The Southern Rifles were noted in field and on parade. On June 29, 1866, Brigadier-General Carey, Acting-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Forces in Victoria, inspected the Southern Rifles, 115 rank and file, five sergeants present, under the command of Major Moody, Captain Farie, Lieutenants Chambers and Black, and Assistant-Surgeon Llewellyn. After the manual exercises had been gone through, Brigadier-General Carey said: "I never saw a finer body of men." In 1872 the corps possessed a fife and drum band, composed of 18 boys. The total strength of the corps in that year was four officers, six sergeants, and 144 rank and file, in all 154 men, besides eight recruits; Captain Chambers and Lieutenants Hill and Leplastrier, the officers in charge.

To pass on to subjects more directly affecting the city. In March, 1865, a rating appeal was heard, and some interesting figures were placed on record in

connection therewith. The Melbourne and Suburban Railway Company appealed against the Council's assessment of £3,000 for that portion of their line, 1 mile 49 chains, which ran through the Borough of Prahran. The land comprised in the line was 26 acres, which were valued at £15,600; compensation for buildings, £10,000; cutting and filling, £14,617; land at Gardiner's Creek Station (South Yarra), £200; station, £1,900; gates at crossings, £200; fences, £620; bridges, £8,300; permanent way, £10,594; drains and culverts, £500; total, £62,521. The valuer for the Council, Mr. Griffin, in cross-examination, said he had computed the land as worth £600 an acre, taking as his criterion two sales of land which had taken place, the one near the Gardiner's Creek Station, and the other near Osborne Street, both of which had brought considerably over £800 an acre. The profits of the company for the past year were over £26,800. The Bench held the opinion that the valuation had not been made on a proper basis, and the £10,000 paid for compensation for buildings should have been placed on the land. The Bench ordered the assessment to be laid on £52,000; that was, the £10,000 allowed for compensation for buildings, was to be deducted.

A furious and somewhat extraordinary municipal storm raged in June, 1866. John Hanlon Knipe, an auctioneer, well known in Melbourne in after years, was returned as a member of the Council. A protest was handed to the Mayor against his election, on the ground that he was an uncertificated insolvent, and rendered incompetent thereby from taking his seat.

Knipe did take his seat, and thereupon the Mayor, Cr. Vail, and two other councillors, desired to obtain counsel's opinion upon the point. A formal protest was entered against such a wise course by Councillors J. B. Crews, John Hanlon Knipe and Charles Hutchins (June 11, 1866), objecting to the funds of the municipality being expended for such purpose. In the meanwhile, James White, a merchant and councillor, filed a summons in the Supreme Court calling upon Knipe to show cause why he should not be ousted of the office of councillor of the Borough, on the ground that he was at the time of his election incapable, under the provisions of the "Municipal Corporations Act 1863," of being or continuing such councillor, he then being an uncertificated insolvent on December 1, 1855, at Fiery Creek and Ballarat. The summons set forth that Knipe was elected on May 8, and duly returned a councillor on May 14, and that he then made the declaration accepting office, and voted as a councillor. Knipe had been insolent three times. For the last two insolvencies he possessed certificates of discharge, but he neglected to obtain a certificate for the Fiery Creek insolvency.

The summons was made returnable before the Chief Justice Stawell, Mr. Justice Barry and Mr. Justice Williams. Speaking for the Court, the Chief Justice said: "Mr. Knipe's experience in insolvency was such that he well knew what he might do; he had failed to obtain a certificate for his Fiery Creek insolvency, and therefore the petitioner's (White) protest was upheld," and Knipe ousted from the office of councillor on July 9. Knipe, when elected, was third on the poll. The figures were: Young, 467; Widdicombe,

418; Knipe, 381. Party feeling ran very high, Knipe issuing what were described as "libellous and scurrilous handbills." On one side much satisfaction was felt at Knipe's downfall, and it was stated he had "fallen municipally, never to rise again." His "cheek" and "bombast" were denounced. He was charged with having come out to Prahran, where he was not wanted, and setting the ratepayers at variance. The following lines lampooned him throughout the municipality:—

"Councillor Knipe sat on a wall,  
Councillor Knipe had a great fall,  
Not all Prahran's bluster, nor all Prahran's men,  
Could set Councillor Knipe up again."

Knipe himself did not take such a despairing view of his position. Without any delay he procured his certificate of discharge for his Fiery Creek insolvency, and then hastened to present himself as a candidate for the vacant seat caused by his being ousted. This was too much for the Prahran *Telegraph*, which echoed a section of public opinion, and trounced Knipe. There could be but one result, the *Telegraph* thought, and Knipe would receive such an expression of opinion that he would leave Prahran severely alone. Knipe's opponent was Charles Brown. The voting was: Brown, 596; Knipe, 548. The press was satisfied, though they did admit that Knipe, in face of all the opposition, put up a good fight. When he proffered himself, as he promised the ratepayers he would do, in August, his opponents were astounded. The man was irrepressible. When the figures came out, the election taking place

on August 16, a great silence fell upon them, including also the *Prahran Telegraph*. The returns of the voting papers showed:—

Knipe . . . . .	747
Ogg . . . . .	647
Goold . . . . .	622
Lewis . . . . .	615

One man alone lifted his voice in the local press, and it was in the nature of a wail. He says: "The result forces one to the conclusion that honest worth, a blameless life, and business ability, are not the qualities sought by the majority of the voters of Prahran."

In 1869, on January 15, the "retirement" of J. B. Crews from the Council took place. His "retirements" were, however, like those of a prima donna, his "last appearances" being the forerunners of several "Here we are agains!" right up to 1887, when the ratepayers placed him at the bottom of the poll. He mentioned then that he had been termed "The Father of Prahran," and if that was so, he had a "most ungrateful lot of children." Whenever any big municipal question came to the fore, the heat of discussion appeared to give the old man renewed vitality, as Antaeos of old restored his strength by touching mother earth:—

"As once Antaeos, in the Libyan strand,  
More fierce recovered when he reached the sand."

However, "King Crews," as others less worthy than he called him, had, up to his first retirement, served the Borough well for 14 years, and during that time was the subject of a large amount of hostile criticism. In the early fifties it was customary to refer to Chapel Street as the "pet street" of Crs. Crews and Mason,

and everything they proposed for its improvement was the outcome of sinister motives. Posterity, however, must judge Cr. Crews by his record. His acts have stood the test of time. When he retired the burgesses presented him with a gold watch and chain, with a blood-stone seal attached, and a purse containing 75 sovereigns. The subscriptions were confined to rate-payers only, and £113 had been subscribed from sixpences to £2/2/-. In acknowledging the gift, Cr. Crews stated that he endeavoured to leave Prahran better than he found it. He came to Prahran when Chapel Street was a grove of big gum trees, and half the Borough an impracticable swamp. He described the anxiety with which the Council "incubated" the first municipal work done in Prahran—the construction of the culvert in Williams Road, and he referred to the great Town Hall struggle; the late Dr. Fetherston, so long in after years chairman of the Prahran Bench, was in evidence with a vote of thanks to Mr. Broadbent, the chairman of the Testimonial Committee. The following quatrain was suggested at the time for inscription on a pendant to the watch:—

"In our Council, men of various views,

English, Irish, Welsh and Scotch,

For fourteen years have watched our Crews.

May Crews now long keep the watch."



SAMUEL WILLIS

*The Mayor who proclaimed Prahran a City*





## CHAPTER XII.

FIRST BUILDING REGULATIONS — RATEPAYERS *v.* COUNCIL — A  
SUPPRESSED ADVERTISEMENT—PRAHRAN PROCLAIMED A CITY—  
THE NEW POST OFFICE—EARLY SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS  
—THE FIRST MARKET—LIGHTING PRAHRAN—REMARKABLE  
LAND SALES.

IN August, 1872, for the first time in the history of Prahran, the annual election to fill the vacancies in the Council, caused by the retirement of three councillors, Messrs. Vail, De Gruchy and W. Howard Smith, was allowed to go by without a contest, the three being returned unopposed. Long before the following August the councillors and ratepayers were the parties to an extraordinary municipal feud. The subject of the quarrel was the introduction of building regulations into the town. For six months previously the Council had been engaged in framing them. The ratepayers appear to have been strangely indifferent to all that was going on. On July 22, 1872, the regulations were duly passed by the Council, and they were then open for a month for inspection by ratepayers, but they did not avail themselves of their right to inspect the regulations, or to protest against them. The Council was led by the quiescence with which its proposal to adopt the regulations was received to infer that they met with the approval of the ratepayers. On August 19 the Council confirmed the regulations, and they were certified by the Hon. J. W. Stephen, in his capacity as Attorney-

General, on September 11, under Sections 178 and 179 of the Boroughs' Statute, as not contrary to any law in force in Victoria. The regulations were duly advertised in the *Government Gazette* on September 20, and then they had all the force of law. The Prahran *Telegraph* published the regulations *in extenso*. When the burgesses read the paper, and realised the position they were in, there was a feeling of widespread indignation. The local press stated "public spirit was not dead; the old fire of opposition which in times gone by used to burn so fiercely had not been extinguished."

That this was so was shown at a meeting held on October 24, in the Town Hall, to consider the advisability or otherwise of postponing the operation of the building regulations for a period of five years. The hall was densely packed. The attendance was estimated at 1,500. The Mayor, Cr. George Lewis, was in the chair. Successive speakers, including Crs. James Hole, J. B. Crews, M.L.A., and Robb, denounced the incidence of the regulations, especially a fee of £2 for permission to build. The meeting carried, amidst loud applause, a resolution that a deputation, consisting of Mr. Crews, M.L.A., J. Crook, T. Thomas and E. J. Dixon wait on the Chief Secretary, asking the Government to rescind the building regulations then in force in Prahran. On January 3, 1873, the deputation saw the Chief Secretary, and gave him a petition signed by 2,040 ratepayers, of whom no less than 1,877 were actually on the roll of ratepaying electors. Mr. Crews, in presenting the petition, asserted that not 100 persons in the town could be found who agreed with the present regulations. Even the councillors admitted they were too

drastic, but they declined to rescind them or suspend them while they prepared others less arbitrary. The Council's action was characterised as unjust and tyrannical. The Chief Secretary, in reply, said that the Government could only do what the law allowed it to do in protecting the public against any arrogance of power the Council assumed that it did not possess. In the meantime he would ascertain from the Attorney-General what those powers were. The Council was asked whether it had anything to urge before the Government considered the statements and allegations contained in the petition forwarded by the ratepayers to the Chief Secretary's Department.

The Council was fortified by legal advice; the councillors were assured the adoption of the regulations was well within their powers, and that every step the Council had taken was quite constitutional, and in accordance with the Local Government Act. Therefore the Council maintained its dignity, and awaited the Ministerial thunderbolt. The Chief Secretary sent the Council his reply, wherein he suggested that as several councillors retired in the coming August, that—

“The Council should suspend any action under the regulations until the municipal election shall have determined the will of the ratepayers in regard to them, and to take measures in the meanwhile to circulate the proper amendments, so that the necessity of interference on the part of the Government might be avoided.”

The Chief Secretary's advice to the Council made the position worse. Even some ratepayers who were opposed to the building regulations joined with the Council in resenting the veiled dictation contained in

the letter. The Council denounced the interference with the freedom of local self-government, even supposing that the Council in its wisdom consented to the building regulations duly amended, adopted, confirmed and legalised, not coming into force for four weeks. Public opinion and official pressure, coupled with a sense that some of the regulations were too drastic, did eventually induce the Council to modify the stringent clauses. Considerable delay was experienced in obtaining the official approval of the Attorney-General. The regulations were returned to the Council again and again for amendments, and the opinion was expressed by the councillors that these amendments were purposely vexatious, and made for the purposes of delay.

The Council told the Chief Secretary, officially, that the councillors would "consider themselves unworthy to hold their seats if they did not carry out their legislation founded on Act of Parliament, and sanctioned by the Crown." Again, "We further desire to say that while we shall always respect the definite mandate of the Hon. the Chief Secretary, we place upon record our protest against all outside interference with our representative functions, especially when engaged in making an admitted and undoubted sanitary and strictly legal measure." Having at last carried the building regulations a second time past the censorship of the Attorney-General, it only remained for them to be advertised in the *Government Gazette* to become law. After all the irritating delays the Council had been subjected to victory appeared well within its grasp, but the Progress Committee of Prahran, a body that came suddenly into existence, was at work in another direction. On July



D<sup>R</sup>. GERALD H. FETHERSTON

*A Notable Chairman of the Profranch Bench*



JAMES MASON

*A Public-Spirited Pioneer*



3, 1873, the Council, by its Town Clerk, John Craven, had made all arrangements for the publication of the notice in the *Government Gazette* of July 4. The pound, for the insertion, was received by the Government printer, Mr. Ferres. The *Gazette* came out, but the advertisement was not in its pages. The *Telegraph* printed the following paragraph on the day afterwards:—

“The Prahran Building Regulations, which it was expected would be advertised in last night’s *Government Gazette*, do not appear therein; we have very good grounds for saying that their appearance will be delayed until the opinion of the electors concerning them is ascertained by the result of the municipal elections to come off next month.”

Afterwards we read that the Progress Committee of Prahran have, “step by step, thwarted the Town Council in its ends to frame a code of building regulations, and now they have fairly routed it. No other conclusion can be come to after the action taken by the Chief Secretary last week in interposing the autocratic power which the Local Government Act invests him with to prevent the insertion in the *Government Gazette* of the advertisement necessary to give legality to the regulations.” Mr. Crews, M.L.A., was credited with having, at the last moment, persuaded the Chief Secretary to act as he did. In consequence, some of the members of the Council felt very bitterly towards him. With a view to learning more about what was termed “underground engineering,” Mr. R. Murray Smith, M.L.A., was induced to ask the Chief Secretary, in the House, to cause enquiries to be made as to why the advertisement relating to the Prahran Building Regulations had not appeared in the *Government Gazette*, when the money paid for its insertion had been received. The

Chief Secretary "explained" that the advertisement had been held over at his orders, pending the result of the municipal elections, so the Council failed to shake home its strong suspicions of the "back stairs influence" used by Mr. Crews.

The Council was full of chagrin at the turn of events. It pointed out that the building regulations already published had the full force of law, as they had been in no wise rescinded. The Progress Committee was jubilant, and its executive determined to run three candidates in opposition to the retiring councillors, and to make the abolition of the building regulations the battle cry at the forthcoming elections. When the fated day came the Council was beaten. We are told that the "excitement was something to be remembered even in Prahran, where many exciting scenes have aforetime been witnessed." The voting was:—Young, G., 999; Crews, J. B., 979; Ross, D., 941; Harris, J., 894; Dixon, E. J., 868; Lewis, C. J., 853. The position of the late Mayor Lewis on the poll was considered by the Progress Committee as very decisive, as no doubt it was; still, the remarkable feature about the polling was its closeness. There were only 146 votes between the head and the bottom of the poll. That the Progress Party voted true to its election cry and ticket is seen by how few votes interpose the first three. The Council's surviving candidates, Councillors Vail and Lacey, handed in their resignations as councillors, and Messrs. Dixon and Harris, at the extraordinary election that ensued, secured their seats.



In some quarters great personal animus was displayed towards the candidates. In the case of George Young, two men, Thomas and Edward Broadbent, after the election, violently assaulted him in the Town Clerk's room, and again in the street. Young proceeded against them in the Police Court, and each of the accused was fined £10, with £10 costs, or three months' imprisonment.

In his 80th year, ex-Mayor Councillor Vail speaks resentfully of how the Council was treated by the Chief Secretary, at the instance of "wire pullers." Attempts were made afterwards to keep the Progress Committee alive as a municipal watchdog. At the next August elections it was in evidence, but as there was no burning question before the ratepayers, an electioneering squib, that was widely distributed, swept the Committee out of existence—

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE  
PROGRESS COMMITTEE,

Which died August 11, 1874.

A short and stormy life it had,  
And when it fell asleep,  
Its friends they tried to waken it  
From out its slumbers deep;  
It gave a weak convulsive kick,  
But that was all't could do,  
So on Tuesday last it died, and now  
The grave hides it from view.

Rest Quiet Cat in Peace.

The Old Court House cost £1,300, and stood flush with Chapel Street. It was regarded as interfering with the architectural beauty of the Town Hall. When the building was pulled down, the Prahran justices sat for a time and administered the law's penalties in the

Town Hall. On Tuesday, September 9, 1869, the justices moved from the Town Hall to the new Court House at the back of the hall, now swallowed up by, and forming part of, the Prahran Council Chamber. The building was described as a large and commodious one, but the place badly required new furniture. "When," says a contemporary report of the Court's first sitting, "the Court was held in the hall adjoining, although the decision could not be heard, the expressive countenances of the majority could at any rate be seen, and gave the beholder an idea of the sentence they were passing upon the unfortunate culprits, but now all this is changed. From a portion of the Court House no more of the magistrates can be seen than if they were like the Olympian Jove, when delivering his fiat, veiled in the mystery of a cloud." This Court House was in use until the substantial brick building in Macquarie Street was erected, and which was opened on January 9, 1888, without any ceremony. Subsequently the chairman of the bench, Dr. Fetherston, entertained the justices at a luncheon in honour of the event.

Dr. Gerald H. Fetherston occupied the position of chairman of the bench for 21 consecutive years, and during that time, it is stated, no decision of his was quashed on appeal. He was born at Roscommon, Ireland, in 1830, and was educated in his profession at Dublin and Glasgow. When he had graduated and obtained his degree he commenced his career by journeying to America as medical officer in charge of immigrants. He fulfilled the same office to Australia, and, like his compeer, Dr. William Thompson, of South Yarra, he finally settled down in Prahran, his first

location being a little house close to where the Mechanics' Institute is now, but on the opposite side of Chapel Street. In many ways he was associated with the public institutions of Victoria, while in Prahran he was returning officer, public vaccinator, and the health officer of the city. For thirty-six years he resided in Prahran, and was one of the first territorial magistrates. He had an abrupt manner, and was decidedly of a choleric temperament, a hater of shams and humbugs, but withal a warm-hearted, generous man, and a strong Prahran personality. He was accorded a military funeral when he died, in September, 1901. His son, Dr. R. H. Fetherston, who was a Prahran councillor for some years, succeeded his father in the position of the city's health officer. The chairmanship of the bench, on Dr. Fetherston's decease, fell to the late William Witt, J.P., a well known Prahran chemist, who had in the fifties been returned to the Legislative Assembly as the first member for the Ovens District. In the passing, however, of Dr. Fetherston, the distinctive character of the Prahran Bench disappeared, for there is no doubt that the "old doctor" stamped the Court with the impress of his masterful ways, though he, with all his hot and fierce denunciations of malicious wrong-doers, ever leaned to leniency's side.

Prahran was a town of considerable importance in 1871, yet the residents lacked the conveniences afforded by the electric telegraph. Attention was drawn to the inadequate postal facilities by the death of A. F. White, already mentioned as the first postmaster of Prahran, a position he held for 20 years. He

was well liked, and was at one time a member of the Borough Council. A diffidence was felt in moving while he was alive, for the appointment of a qualified postmaster. In advocating for the establishment of a proper post office, instead of the make shift of half a chemist's shop, it was urged that the town had a large local trade awaiting to be benefited by the electric telegraph. Further, the assertion was made that the postal arrangements had not kept pace with the town's growth. An addition to the Town Hall, to be used as a post office, on the vacant space between the north end of that building and Greville Street, was suggested.

In October of the same year the Council decided to take steps to have established in Prahran a Post, Telegraph and Money Order Office. After some interviews and correspondence, the Duffy Ministry, then in power, granted the request of the Council, but decided to place the office at a spot known as Hardwick's corner, at the junction of Toorak Road and Chapel Street. Prahran residents considered that the site selected was quite unsuitable. As far back as April, 1867, the Council had agitated for a telegraph office, but the then Chief Secretary declined to receive a deputation from the Council, as "he was fully seized of all the circumstances." The Council on this occasion was fortified in its demands that Hardwick's corner site be abandoned by the residents holding an indignation meeting protesting against the site, and a motion was carried, appointing the Mayor, Cr. Geo. Lewis, Mr. Crews, M.L.A., the Rev. W. Moss, Dr. Fetherston, J.P., and Councillors R. Murray Smith, Young and Harrison to wait on the

Postmaster-General. The result of that deputation and further efforts made by the Council was that the site desired alongside the Town Hall was selected, the Council giving the Postal Department a 999 years' lease at a peppercorn rental. At the time it was thought that the Council had not much the best of the bargain with regard to the building erected that now forms a portion of the public library. The Government voted £5,000 towards the cost, and in return it received the police quarters and postal and telegraph accommodation. The contract for the building came to £6,100, the Council paid the amount less £5,000. The first telegram ever received in the Prahran Post Office was flashed through on August 1, 1872. Since that day post and telegraph offices have been established in all the principal divisions of the City, as well as a telephone exchange at Windsor. Probably the first telephone wire laid was that to F. W. Haddon, South Yarra, editor of the *Argus*, in 1876.

If the proclamation of Prahran as a town in 1870 was not the occasion of rejoicing, a very different spirit animated the ratepayers on the place arriving at the maturity of a city. One of the most popular of Prahran men was Mayor Cr. Samuel Willis. He is an early Prahranite, as is also his excellent wife, who was a Miss Wragge, of South Yarra. "Sam" Willis passed his life as man and boy in Prahran since 1852, his parents residing in one of the primitive houses, then common, which stood where the tramway engine house is now, at the corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street. During all his vigorous manhood, "Sam" was a sport, a lover of horses, cricket, quoits, and

he at one time kept a stud of greyhounds, the fleetness of one slut, "Linda," being still remembered. On one occasion he rode a horse race for one of the Payne brothers. The rough course was from the Village Belle Hotel, along Chapel Street, to the finish at Union Street, Windsor. Three horses took part in the race. Galloping hard up the hill in Chapel Street, St. Kilda, "Sam," on Payne's mare, "Beeswing," lost the other two in a cloud of dust behind him, and won easily. That such a race could take place along Chapel Street gives a curious glimpse into the traffic of the street in those days, and the free and easy methods of its residents, who could turn on occasion their principal thoroughfare into a race track. For years "Sam" Willis was a contractor, with his brothers, for the Prahran Council, supplying bluestone from their quarries at Richmond. Ex-Cr. Willis and his wife have been honoured with presentations of silver plate from Prahran as tokens of their worth and citizenship. "Sam's" sons have followed in their father's footsteps, having a taste for municipal life. His eldest son, Sam, has been Mayor of Richmond, and his second son, Ernest, is now a councillor of Prahran.

The notification of Prahran as a city in the *Government Gazette* is of historical interest, and it reads as follows:—

CITY OF PRAHRAN.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Melbourne, May 27, 1879.

Present:

His Excellency the Governor.

Sir Bryan O'Loughlen

Major Smith

Mr. Grant

Mr. Longmore

Mr. Lalor

Mr. Patterson.

Whereas by the Local Government Act 1874, it was, amongst other things, enacted that, subject to the provisions of the said Act, the Governor-in-Council might make, order, or declare any borough having in the year preceding such declaration a gross revenue of not less than twenty thousand pounds, a city, and it has been enacted that every petition to declare any borough a city or town should be under the common seal of such borough. And whereas by a proclamation under the hand of the Governor, the seal of the Colony, bearing date the third day of May, 1870, the Borough of Prahran was constituted a town. And whereas the boundaries of the said town are described in the second schedule appended to the Act above recited. And whereas a petition under the common seal of the Town of Prahran for the declaration of such town to be a city has been presented to the Governor-in-Council. And whereas the revenue of the said town of Prahran, in the year ending September 30, 1878, has not been less than twenty thousand pounds. Now, therefore, His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, with the advice of the Executive Council, doth by this present order declare the said town of Prahran to be a city, by the name of the

#### CITY OF PRAHRAN.

And the Honourable Sir Bryan O'Loughlen, Bart., Her Majesty's Acting Chief Secretary of Victoria, shall give the necessary directions herein accordingly.

ROBERT WADSWORTH,

Clerk of the Executive Council.

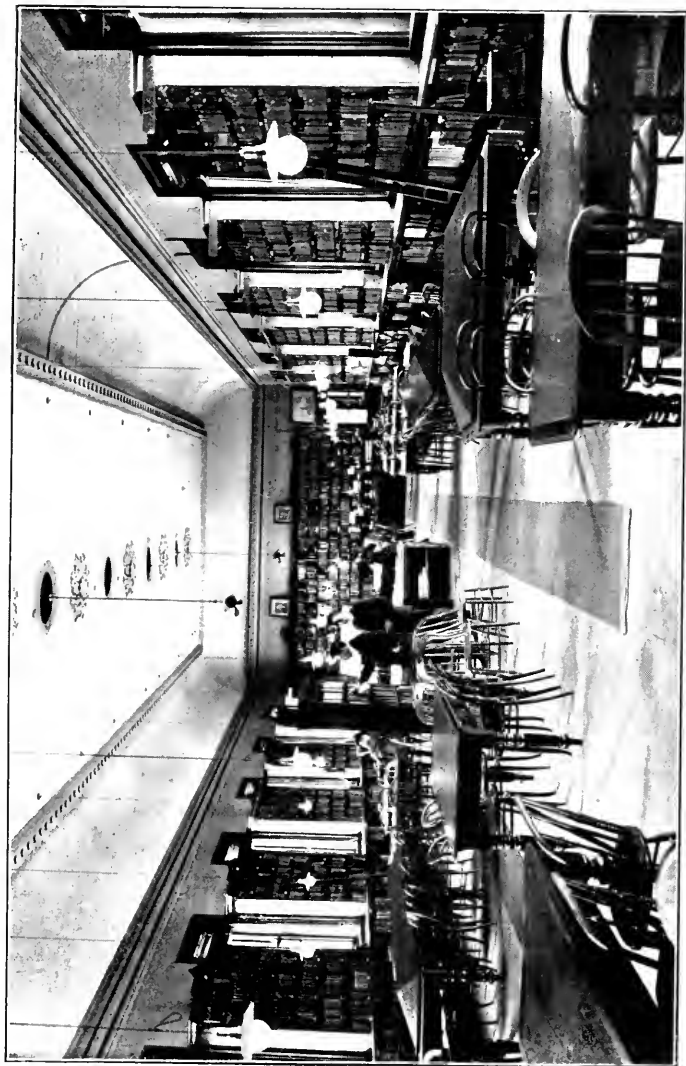
Cr. Willis, as Mayor, and his wife, as Mayoress, made it a feature of the celebrations that ensued on July 1 to entertain all the children of the district, who had in consequence a specially royal time from a children's point of view. In the evening a torchlight procession, after the manner of those days, took place, the Mayor proclaiming the place a city from a drag in front of the Town Hall. Chapel Street was so crowded by humanity on the occasion that there was scarcely any moving room. Afterwards a banquet was held, and all necessary honor paid to the great event. Many verses were written by

inspired bards. At the banquet a long poem was recited by P. K. O'Hara, the first verse reading:—

“Fair city of this beauteous southern land,  
Among my sister cities take thy stand,  
And rear thy head on this rejoicing morn,  
To higher aims and destinies new born,  
Scarce thirty years in Time's unerring round.  
Through all the strange mutations that abound  
In this young land—have barely passed away,  
Since some among you here beheld the day  
A canvas tent in Chapel Street was seen,  
A frail, precursor of what since has been  
A thriving village—then a wealthy town,  
Now what this day auspicious claims to crown  
A noble city, vigorous and great,  
On this, its natal day, no pride elate.  
All hail! We greet the city—fair Prahran!  
So peerless in thy pace since first the race began!”

In 1868 a hoax that caused Prahran some amusement was a reported discovery of gold, but the spot was not disclosed; in October, 1869, the *Argus* stated: “We understand that gold has been found in the property of Mr. Alfred Watson, Orrong Paddock, Toorak. It was discovered in a sort of cement reef, which in places appears on the surface. A portion of the stone, which was tested by Mr. Birkmyre, gave a return at the rate of 2 ozs. 12 dwts. per ton.” There must have been jokers abroad in 1869. Here is another wonder the *Telegraph* vouches for a year afterwards: “We have been favoured with the view of a goose egg belonging to Mr. Stratford, of Bendigo Street, weight 11 ozs., length  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, circumference  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, which can be seen at the Emu Hotel. It is certainly a most extraordinary large egg.” And perhaps the most extraordinary circumstance was its exhibition at the Emu Hotel.





THE PRAHRAN PUBLIC LIBRARY



The sanitary arrangements of the early settlement were, as is usual, primitive. After a time the Council made by-laws governing the construction of pits, these in time were abolished in favor of pans, the Council by means of a rate undertaking the service for the common weal. In 1889 the one-pan service gave way to what was known as the double-pan service, the vessels being cleaned and deodorised. That in its turn was succeeded by the flushing system ; the first sewerage connection being made May 30, 1898.

In 1856, when Prahran became a Municipality, two systems of education were in force in Victoria, named respectively the denominational and the national, under two separate Boards in operation at the same time. That system continued until 1862, when it was abolished, and a single Board of Education was constituted, the fees ranging from 6d. to 2/6 for all children, except to parents who were in destitute circumstances. In 1872 the Education Act provided for the formation of a Department of Education, the system introduced being free, compulsory and secular instruction. Prior to that Act religious, as well as secular, instruction was imparted by the teachers according to the denomination to which the school belonged, subsidy being granted by the State. There were also what were termed Ragged Schools, two of them being in Prahran, one in Commercial Road and the other in Windsor. The Council in the early days occasionally voted these schools £5 each. One of the first schoolmasters, and one whose memory is revered by many Prahran residents who have now arrived at man's estate, was George Messervey. He taught the early

Prahran young hopefuls in the schoolroom attached to the Independent Chapel. Ex-Mayor William Davies remembers how Messervey took walks with the scholars, and pointed out the various lessons that may be read in Nature's books. He lived at the corner of Greville and Macquarie Streets, where the old gabled house is still standing. Messervey often stated he named Macquarie Street after the harbour in Sydney, that was, in its turn, called after N.S.W. Governor Lachlan Macquarie (1808). Messervey and his sister lived in the first two-roomed paling house in South Yarra. Both were of keen intellectual attainments, and devoted to their work. About 1872 they ceased teaching, and returned to their native place, Jersey, one of the Channel Islands, where they were seen by Mr. Davies's father some years afterwards.

Another picturesque figure in the early scholastic life of Prahran was that of a fine French lady named Madame Lautour, whose maiden name was Josephine Marie Le Breton. She was born in 1816, in the old province of Normandy, at Vire, in Calvados, and came with her husband to Prahran in 1853. She had been engaged in teaching in England, and when she arrived in Prahran she started a girls' school, which she continued almost up to her death in 1900. Many a lady in Melbourne to-day is under a life-long debt of gratitude to this distinguished woman, to know whom was a liberal education in all that was good in woman at her best in refinement and education. She first settled in High Street, in the locality now known as Hillingdon Place, which was so named after M.

Lautour's cottage, for Madame called her house Hillingdon Villa, after a place in England where she had spent many happy days. Her husband was a fine man, too, not unlike Longfellow in appearance, a picture of whom was in Madame's drawing room, and which was often mistaken for M. Latour. Yet another well-known school-master was Mr. McKenzie, of the Prahran Academy. He had as a pupil Tom Pearce, of "Loch Ard fame," and the rescuer of Miss Carmichael. His people resided in South Yarra. While they were residents there his father, Captain Pearce, was drowned off the Queensland coast in his steamer, the "Gothenberg." Father and son seemed doomed to shipwreck, a stormy petrel evidently following their fate. Tom was in the "Eliza Ramsden" when she was lost, in the "Loch Ard," twice dismasted, and in the "Loch Lunard" when she was wrecked off the Irish coast. The street in which the Pearces lived was Avoca, and it derived its name from Kirk's house, "Avoca," the Kirks owning a large block of land embracing a portion of Punt Hill. Caroline Street was named after Kirk's wife, Caroline Kirk. Darling Street, first called Prahran Street, was altered in name in honour of Governor Sir Charles Darling, K.C.B., 1863-1866. Just below Avoca Street, on the north side of Toorak Road, about 1874, was a small fancy goods shop, kept by a son of the Italian patriot, Giuseppe Garibaldi. He was named Ricciotti. His course of true love had not run smooth, and he had left Italy after the war with the lady, who was his wife, and who served in the shop. Their secret leaked out, the lady's stern parents

relented, and they both returned to Italy. Ricciotti walked with a limp, the result of a bullet wound. He had distinguished himself in his father's campaigns for freedom, notably on January 20, 1871, when, with Garibaldian troops, he had beaten off a body of Prussian Pomeranians near Dijon.

When the new Education Act came into force nearly all the quasi-invested schools in Prahran were brought under the Act, which enables a return, January 25, 1873, to be quoted. A general increase of scholars took place, owing to the broad-minded and liberal clauses of the Act.

Mr. Gamble's (Church of England), Chapel Street, showed an average attendance during the last six months of the year of 210, but under the new Act the increase in the first two weeks of 1873 was 312.

Mr. Thompson's, Punt Road and High Street, average attendance the previous year, 85, followed by an increase of 50 per cent.

Mr. Connor's (Presbyterian), Punt Road, South Yarra, average attendance the year before, 226, with an increase of about 100.

Mr. Wood's (Wesleyan). Punt Road, average attendance, 110; first two weeks of 1873, 195.

Mr. Shepperd's, Chapel Street, South Yarra, average attendance, 160; first two weeks of 1873, 190.

The Church of England Schoolroom, in Chapel Street, with which so many early memories of old residents' school days are linked, was known as the Common School, No. 492. Its curriculum, as advertised by its head master, Mr. Walter M. Gamble, was: Reading and elocution, writing, dictation, spelling, com-

position, arithmetic, mental arithmetic, euclid, algebra, grammar, geography, history, bookkeeping, latin and french, singing and drawing; a list of subjects that may be regarded as representative of the whole of the schools.

As years went on, the policy of the Education Department became more progressive; the various Governments recognising the importance of liberal grants in aid of education. As an outcome, we have the modern State Schools, fine examples of them being found in Prahran. There is the High Street State School, the site of which contains **three** roods, 131 by 304 feet. The site was purchased from Mr. George P. Mills, the offer of £2,900 being accepted by him on March 16, 1886. The property included a house which, with stable, fencing, fruit and other trees, was sold by auction on July 22, 1886, for removal, and realised £57/4/6. A brick school house was erected in 1888, accommodation 6,000 square feet, costing £5,499/17/6, and was opened on February 13, 1888, by John Blayney. Additions were added in 1899—2,600 square feet, costing £1,157/13/9. Mr. Blayney acted as head teacher until 1894; in 1895, Mr. James McLaren succeeded him.

The Hawksburn State School site contains one acre of land, and is situated at Malvern and Surrey Roads, on six allotments in the Dunster Estate, which were purchased on October 8, 1873, from Mrs. Margaret Hobson, at a cost of £1,110. Additional land was purchased in 1908, costing £1,600—125 feet to Cromwell Road by 184½ feet. A brick school was erected in December, 1874, Crouch and Wilson, architects, and

opened on January 11, 1875, by Walter M. Gamble. Additions were added in 1889 and 1899. The head teachers have been: 1875-78, Walter M. Gamble; 1878-94, Thomas H. Templeton; and in 1895, Charles S. Halkyard.

The name of the State School, No. 1,896, at Hornby Street, was changed to Windsor State School, on November 24, 1891. It possesses a frontage of 110 feet to Hornby Street, by 405 feet deep, and was purchased from Mr. George Crawford in April, 1874, for £1,300. The price included a wooden cottage, No. 46, occupied by the owner, and outbuildings (except a large work room), valued at £300. A brick school was erected in 1877, at a cost of £4,220/7/11, and opened by Mr. Louis N. Shepperd, as a State School, from August 1, 1877. Additions to the building in 1890 cost £754/15/5. The State School, Toorak, having a frontage of 230 feet to Canterbury Road, corner of Brookville Road, was purchased in 1888, costing £2,400. A brick school was erected in 1890, and opened by a relieving teacher on June 9, 1890.

The Armadale State School has 137 feet 6 inches to Sutherland Road, by 287 feet through to Armadale Road, and was purchased by the Department from Mr. Edward O'Donnell, of St. Kilda, for £860, the offer being accepted by him on March 4, 1884. An adjoining allotment, 66 by 140 feet, in Sutherland Road, was bought from Mrs. Thomas, in 1889, for £528. The school—a wooden building, once occupied by the census clerks, was removed from Bowen Street, Melbourne, to this site, and, after renovation, was opened as a State School on September 8, 1884, under



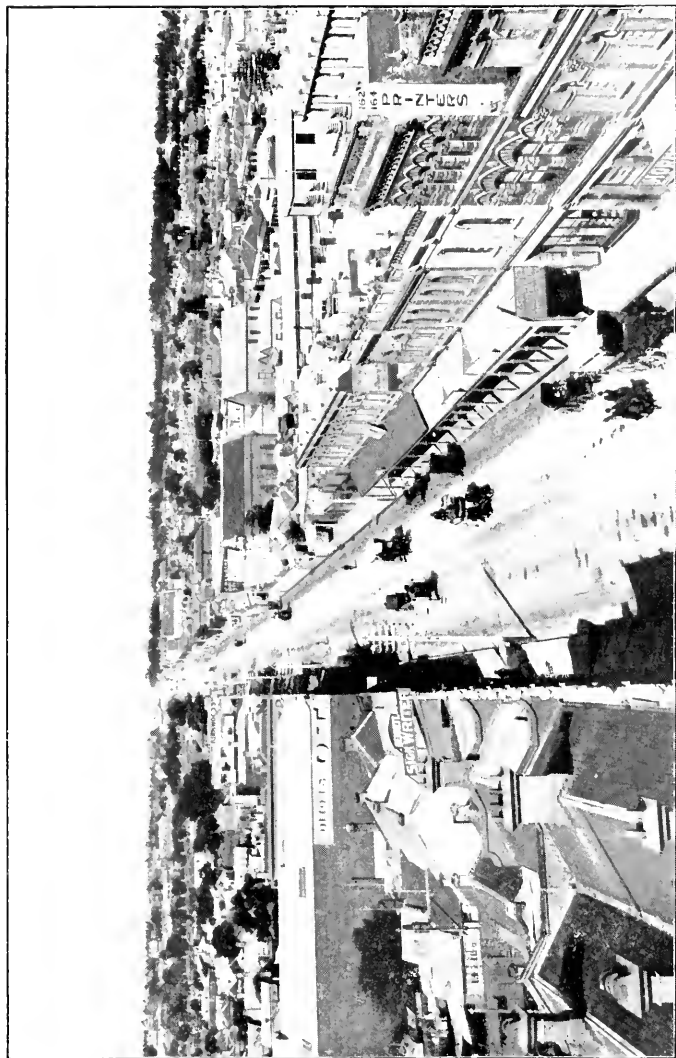
James Crothy, as head teacher. A new brick school was built on August 3, 1886, costing £2,778/16/10. The expenditure on additions is as follows:—1890, £1,793; 1898, £1,526/6/1; 1902, £3,367/3/3 (new infant school). The head teachers have been:—1884-93, James Crothy; 1893-04, James C. Bartlett; 1904-10, William Ryan; 1910-11, John J. Healy. A fire occurred on September 30, 1896, and destroyed three rooms at the north end of the building and damaged four others.

Emerald Hill had a market in 1867, and why, the ratepayers asked, should not Prahran? It was alleged that two-thirds of the market gardeners passed through Prahran to an over-crowded market at Melbourne. They had to go twelve hours before the market opened if they wanted to secure a good position. In consequence of that, Prahran had to put up with stale vegetables, which had been lying for perhaps a week in a greengrocer's shop, and the prices the greengrocers charged were twice as much as they should be. In 1864 the Council purchased some land on the Commercial Road side of Greville Street, thinking that it would be a good site because near a railway station. In the first instance the Council proposed that the experiment of holding the market in the streets should be made, the place to be in Commercial Road, between Chapel Street and the railway bridge. If that experiment proved successful, the Council was prepared to go to the expense of erecting sheds, etc. On June 14, 1867, a public meeting was held to consider the best means to be adopted for establishing a market in the borough, the Mayor, Cr. E. L. Vail, being in the chair.

A motion was moved affirming the necessity of establishing a market, and another, "that the burgesses assist the Council in the furtherance of the object."

At a Council meeting held on July 9, the proposal was discussed. Opposition was evinced from South Yarra, a petition pointing out that the argument in favour of Greville Street site was its centrality, but that did not hold when it was stated that in South Yarra there were 1,056 ratepayers, while in Windsor there were only 1,028. The rateable property in South Yarra was £58,000, while the value of that in Prahran was only £28,000. Considerable feeling was displayed in the discussion, Cr. Widdicombe attacking Cr. Crews. The latter deprecated making the site of the market the subject of a petty quarrel. He was not wedded to any particular place, and would have no objection to having the market site on a piece of Barry's land, in Chapel Street, below Commercial Road. The land in Greville Street had been objected to because of its size, but the piece of land first proposed, at the junction of Chapel Street and Commercial Road, was only 61 by 100 feet, while the Greville Street site was 100 by 400 feet, including the pound, which could be easily removed. A motion rescinding a resolution passed on May 27, 1867, to hold the market "in Commercial Road to the railway bridge," be struck out, and the land purchased by the Council in Greville Street be substituted in its place, was carried. In January, 1868, the Council decided to take the opinion of the burgesses on the following questions:—

First—To hold a market on the ground belonging to the Corporation, in Greville Street.



HIGH STREET, LOOKING EAST FROM CHAPEL STREET

## *In the Nineties*



Second—To purchase four acres of land situate in Chapel Street, north of Mr. Linay's timber yard, for £610, for a market.

Third—No market.

The poll was taken on January 23, and from the few burgesses who took the trouble to record their votes it seemed that the question of a market did not excite much interest, although the figures were held to have been decisive as to the desire of the residents to have a market. Eventually a market was established in Greville and Grattan Streets, the places for the market stalls being roughly indicated. These served for some years, until the markets were erected in Commercial Road, at a cost of £10,000. They were opened on November 3, 1881.

The complaint made about stale vegetables was somewhat an exaggerated statement of existing conditions, for there were several market gardens in Prahran, and certainly numbers on its boundaries, whose owners must have done business with the local shopkeepers. On the aesthetic side of gardening, South Yarra was full of nurseries. In 1856, Smith and Adamson had a small one in Shipley Street, then a larger one between Punt Road and Caroline Street. Bogie's rose nursery was at the corner of Punt Road and Gardiner's Creek Road, which afterwards became the residence of Mr. Justice Fellows; then there was Handasyde, McMillan and Co.'s, in Yarra Street, subsequently purchased by Mr. Joseph Harris. In other directions, incontrovertible evidence exists that Prahran took kindly to the man with the hoe.

The agricultural statistics of the colony, published in the *Government Gazette* for the year ending March 31, 1872, showed that Prahran was considered of sufficient importance as a farm produce area to have its yields quoted. We are told that the number of holdings exceeding one acre is five, and that the land in occupation is 82 acres. The extent of land under tillage, and enclosed, 82 acres. The crops are then described, viz., mangel wurzel, 2 acres; hay, 5 acres; cereal grasses, barley, wheat, oats, 5 acres; maize, 9 acres; rye grass, lucerne, clover, vetches, 3 acres; sorghum, 5 acres; permanent artificial grasses, 40 acres; vines, 3 acres; gardens, 3 acres; orchards, 7 acres. The gross produce was as follows:—Mangel wurzel, 22 tons; 10 tons hay; 7,000 vines; 5 cwt. of grapes not made into wine or brandy, 80 cwt. made into wine and brandy—400 gallons of wine produced.

Among the first accounts (July 12, '56) paid by the Council after it was constituted was 11/- to one Morris, for candles, which shows the primitive means of lighting in the early days. Candles and colza oil lamps were the mediums used by the settlers for illumination. The lantern was as much a part of the resident's household goods as an umbrella is of ours. To-day we have only a faint idea of the difficulty that was experienced in finding well-known localities after dark. Even when the Council commenced the task of lighting the place, the few feeble oil lamps only served to make the darkness more visible.

The City of Melbourne Gas and Coke Co. was the first to supply gas to Prahran. It laid a 12-inch main in September, 1858, from Spring Street, Melbourne,

along Wellington Parade and Bridge Road to Church Street, then continuing with a 9-inch along the latter street across the river, and along Chapel Street to the Town Hall. In 1860, a main was laid over Princes Bridge as far as the Junction, St. Kilda, with branches up Commercial Road and High Street into Prahran. Soon afterwards the Council had a few lamps lit by gas. In 1861 the Council entered into a contract for erecting 28 lamp posts and lamps in Gardiner's Creek Road, from Punt Road to Chapel Street, and the length of Chapel and Greville Streets. The Town Clerk was instructed to obtain the prices of English-made lamp posts. Evidently they were too high, or the local ones were better, for Enoch Chambers made the lamp posts at his foundry. Some talk ensued in October, 1861, Chambers then being a councillor, of his misuse of his position in securing the tender for the man who would use his lamp posts. A contractor named Coop was the successful tenderer for the lamp posts; they bore Chambers's name in the casting, ing, and some ratepayers at once discovered a "job." A discussion took place in the Council; Cr. Chambers told the Council that the manufacture of lamp posts was part of his living, that he sold the lamps to Coop, and that if the Council deemed he had done wrong he would resign his position sooner than be debarred from selling his lamp posts. The Council accepted the explanation as satisfactory, and the little storm passed.

Prahran was glad at first to enjoy the advantages of gas light, but in the sixties its people began to grumble at the monopoly. A half-hearted attempt was made in 1860 to establish a Toorak Gas Company, and the Coun-

oil was asked by its promoters to co-operate with the Company, but the Council took no action. In 1865 great dissatisfaction was expressed so far as the price paid to the Melbourne Gas Company was concerned, viz., 14/- per 1,000 cubic feet. This heavy rate was the cause of the inadequate lighting of the public streets, and private consumers were also penalised. A meeting of ratepayers was held in the Mechanics' Institute, the Mayor, James Stodart, being in the chair, to consider the advisability of starting the Union Gas Company. Cr. Crews stated the Company proposed to supply pure gas at 10/- per 1,000 cubic feet. The borough had to pay the Melbourne Gas Company £12 per year for lighting each lamp, the Union Company would supply gas for each lamp at £7 per annum. The works were proposed to be erected at South Melbourne, to be capable of making 120 million cubic feet of gas per annum. There was no doubt of the Bill of incorporation passing through Parliament, and then the Company proposed to supply the Houses of Parliament and all public buildings at a saving of at least 29 per cent.

The Union Company did not materialise so far as the Prahran Council was concerned, and the city remained the customer of the Melbourne Gas and Coke Company, a company that was subsequently merged with others into the Metropolitan Gas Company. In January, 1868, the supply of gas to the Government offices in Prahran was taken by the Gas and Coke Company at 7/- per 1,000 cubic feet, and £7 per lamp per annum. On the same day a tender for lighting the Town Hall clock, with one gas burner before each dial, was accepted by the Council at the sum of £35



per year. So the gas supply continued for years until the advent into the city of the electric light in the year 1890, when the battle commenced, which has continued since, Gas *v.* Electricity. The oil lamps at the corners of streets, that flickered in the fifties, have given way to powerful electric arc lights, which may be properly described as the suns of the present, as the oil lamps were the rushlights of the past.

Some of the dealings in Prahran land read like a romance in prices. Let us select a notable example to show how profitable the early speculations proved to the first land buyers. Peter Davis purchased Section 62 at the Crown lands sales of 1850. The land had an area of 30 acres, for which he paid about £400. The land had frontages to Dandenong and Williams Roads. Davis sold the section to T. B. Payne, with frontages, at a figure slightly in advance of what he paid. Payne sold the firewood on the land, and received for the sale of the wood more than his purchase money. He then let the land to a tenant as a grazing area, and that tenant paid Payne over £500 for its use during the years he occupied it. He had, in addition, to pay the rates and keep the fences in repair. The land was variously known as Payne's, or Peterson's, paddock. A road was required to connect High Street with Dandenong Road, and Payne donated that road, which is now called Lewisham Road. That reduced his area by about two acres. After this his land was still occupied as two grazing paddocks. Payne offered the land to James Mason for £11,000, but the ex-publican and ex-councillor declined to give more than £10,000. Payne refused the offer, but repented three weeks later.

but too late, as Mason had invested his money elsewhere.

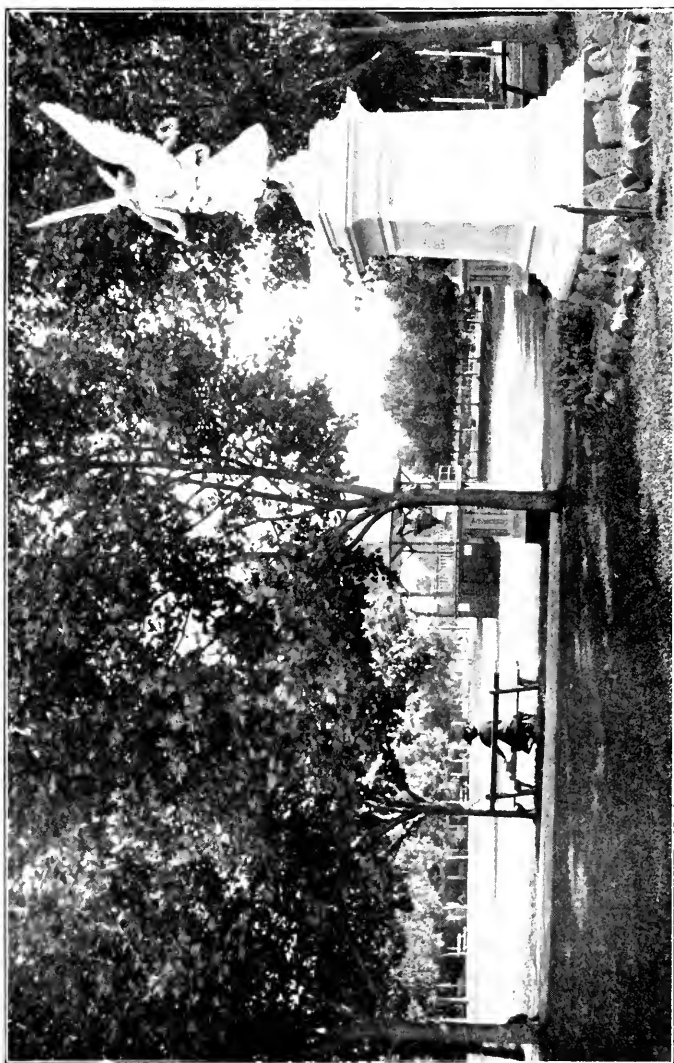
Payne let his land lie for a time, only receiving from it the grazing rentals. Then he sold two acres, for which he received from the purchaser £400 and £200 per acre. On that land was erected the dwelling of the first chairman of the municipality, Cr. F. J. Sargood, who resigned his position on December 24, 1857. The next transaction Payne had with the land was considered a big one. He sold 12 acres at £650 an acre. The remaining portions were eagerly sought, but though high prices were offered, Payne declined to sell. In 1882 he sold about an acre at £11 per foot, which meant about £15,000 per acre. The last transaction that took place in the remaining portion of the land, nearly 15 acres, resulted in Payne receiving £318 per acre, or about £13,750. When land, the best business sites in Chapel Street, realised the sum of £25 per foot, it was thought that the high-water mark had been reached. In December, 1880, the first sensational rise in values took place. The land in question was situated opposite the Arcade, and formed a portion of the estate of the late Joseph Dickason. It was offered for sale by Messrs. Crews and Arkle, the reserve price being fixed at £16 per foot. The prices brought at the sale caused a flutter of excitement in Chapel Street. The first lot submitted brought £47 a foot. It had 20 feet frontage to Chapel Street by a depth of 99 feet, with a frontage of 10 feet to Chatham Street at the rear, together with buildings thereon. Lots 2 and 3, with frontages of 16 feet 3 inches, and depths of 115 feet to a 10 feet right-of-way, were, like the first

lot, bought by the late Mr. Chambers, of South Yarra, father of the present Cr. Chambers, for £38 and £44 per foot; James Hole, an ex-councillor, secured Lot 4 at £46 per foot, while a Mr. Gurling purchased Lot 5 at £40 a foot, and disposed of it at an advance to the man who occupied the block, Mr. I. Madden, a jeweller. Before the above prices could be reported in the press, Mr. Francis Conway purchased privately the large block at the corner of Chapel and Green Streets, at £17/10/- per foot. What the agent and owner thought when they heard of the phenomenal rise in Chapel Street land values must be left to conjecture.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE FIRST LOAN—PURCHASE OF PARK LANDS—SUBSEQUENT LOANS —PRAHRAN GARDENS—PRAHRAN TOWN CLERKS.

THE Prahran Council, from the first days, manifested an interest in horticulture. Always encouragement was extended to the various local horticultural societies that sprang up from time to time. As early in the Council's history as 1861, the Council waited, with the Hawthorn and Richmond Councils, on the Government, and asked for a grant of land in the Survey Paddock, at Richmond, for the purposes of a Horticultural Society. That request was granted, and the land is now the site of the Burnley Horticultural College. The first public reserve the Prahran Council possessed was the five acres of land at the corner of Commercial and Punt Roads, which had been granted to the Borough by the Government. The gift was regarded somewhat as in the nature of a white elephant. Allegations have been made that the Council neglected the land, and grudged the amount expended on the post and rail fence. Such a feeling is quite probable, since the Council had greater claims on its money for more pressing and utilitarian works in the heart of dwelling places. Fawkner Park itself, then known as the South Park Reserve, was not fenced in until June, 1857, and was only permanently reserved from sale on June 21, 1873. An attempt was made, in April, 1860, to turn a portion of the South Park into a cemetery, but that



*"In a Garden Fair"*

VICTORIA GARDENS, HIGH STREET



design was successfully opposed by the Prahran and St. Kilda Councils.

In connection with Prahran's reserve, an opportunity was afforded to the Council, in 1868, to be relieved of the reserve. In that year, Prince Alfred, then on a visit to Australia, was walking on the sands at Clontarf, when he was shot by the half-madman O'Farrell. The Prince was dangerously wounded. His life trembled in the balance. In thankfulness for his recovery, the Sydney people decided to erect a hospital—the Prince Alfred Hospital. Melbourne, not less loyal, also determined to build a lasting memento of public gratitude for the Prince's escape, in the form of another hospital, also to be called the Prince Alfred Hospital. The Executive Committee of the movement found some difficulty in procuring a suitable site. In its dilemma it wrote to the Prahran Council, requesting a gift of the five acres recently granted to the Council, provided the Government sanctioned the gift. This request of the committee was complied with, on the motion of Cr. Crews, seconded by Cr. Lacey, with the proviso that the sum the Council had laid out in fencing the land, £288, be refunded by the Executive Committee, to be repaid by the Council as a donation towards the building. The Council also stipulated that the Government did not demand the £100 it had received as a grant in aid to fence the reserve; in the event of the Government doing so, the Executive Committee was to pay the £100. All these conditions were fulfilled, the Government foregoing any claim to the £100.

The medical profession decried the site, owing to the initial difficulty to secure adequate drainage.

Trouble was experienced for years afterwards from that source. In Prahran, the parting with the reserve was regarded as a blunder, and the act was used as an argumentative bludgeon years afterwards, when the first loan was mooted. The "blunder" has not been productive of much harm. A large hospital, on the boundary of a city, must be potent for good in the relief of poor suffering humanity, though the Alfred Hospital, in situation, still remains more or less inconvenient. For several years afterwards, Prahran remained without any public reserve. In 1884 the Council decided to float a loan of £12,500 for the purchase of recreation reserves. At various times during the existence of the Council intermittent attempts were made to pass motions authorising loans for the purposes of road construction and other permanent works, but a conservative majority was always dominant to prevent any borrowing that would entail the mortgage of rates. In the present proposals a section of the ratepayers at once perceived that the Council was launching out in a wild manner to saddle ratepayers with heavy tithes if municipal bankruptcy was to be averted. The one shilling rate had been so often struck by the Prahran Council as to be regarded almost as a permanent rate. To those, however, who had considered the subject, it was evident that the quiet and easy going method of carrying on the affairs of Prahran with a one shilling rate must cease, if the town was to progress. The Council had lost the revenue derived from the tolls, the turnpikes having been abolished. The toll moneys amounted to large sums. As far back as 1864 the Church Street toll produced



£1,135 in revenue. The abolition of tolls, in 1874, was due to South Bourke's parliamentary representative, Mr. J. B. Crews. South Bourke was the home of many wood carters, and they anathematized tolls. In a thin House, one night, in Parliament, during the progress of the Local Government Bill, he snatched a victory. The catch vote was a surprise to the country, but Parliament had the wisdom to confirm the vote afterwards, though for many years the loss of toll revenues was the source of heart burnings, and some financial straits among the municipalities.

The Prahran Council's exchequer also suffered the loss of rates (about £200) through the purchase by the Government of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway. No increase in the rate, however, took place until some years afterwards.

On July 19, 1884, a meeting was held in the Town Hall, 400 citizens being present, with an ex-Mayor, Cr. George Young, in the chair, protesting against the proposed loan. Statements were made that pleasure gardens might look very well in a poem, but ratepayers wanted their back lanes kept clean, and the streets properly attended to, which was a better way of improving the health of the city. Their rates should not be mortgaged to satisfy the cravings of usurers. The action of the Council, said one of the speakers, had, "during the preceding twelve months, been of a most tyrannical character." Eventually the meeting cased its mind by passing the following resolution:—

"That this meeting most emphatically protests against the action of the Prahran City Council in proposing to float a loan for any purposes whatever, without first obtaining the sanction of the ratepayers."

The Council duly received the protest, and on July 21 carried the recommendation of the Parks' Committee to float a loan of £12,500 for the purpose of purchasing grounds for parks and pleasure grounds.

Before August the Council bought some lands, but the purchases were made secretly. No official information was allowed to escape from the Town Hall. The opposing ratepayers were lost in conjecture as to where the lands were, and what were the prices paid for them. The properties appear to have been at first acquired in councillors' names, or by agents, and the sale notes did not disclose anything regarding the Council as buyers. Clouds of suspicion began to arise in ratepayers' minds, and "jobbery" and "land jobbers" were terms the opponents to the loan and purchase of land freely used. More or less agitation was going on all the time, and the elections were impatiently awaited. They took place on August 14, 1884.

In the meantime parties were formed, known as "Loanites" and "Anti-Loanites," both of whom carried on a vigorous campaign. A poll was taken on the loan proposal, as well as for seats at the Council table. The result, so far as the Council was concerned, was a victory and defeat. The action of the Council in purchasing reserves was not upset. Although a one-third vote would have had the effect of doing that, the Anti-Loanites were unable to bring up to the poll that number by several hundreds. To have secured their object it was incumbent that 2,314 votes should be polled, whereas the number cast was 1,671, or 643 less than was actually necessary. At the poll for councillors

the Loanites' lost two out of their three candidates, and the Anti-Loanites one out of their two. The poll was a heavy one. The Mayor, Cr. W. Templeton, one of the retiring councillors, did not offer himself for re-election. The candidates in support of the purchase of the lands, and favour of the loans, were Crs. Chapman and Michie, and Mr. R. A. Forbes, while Messrs. Crews, Hole and Spurr carried the votes of the Anti-Loanites. The declaration of the poll showed that ex-Mayor Crews, the municipal veteran, was still a power in Prahran. Considerable platform heckling fell to him over the disposal of the reserve to the Prince Alfred Hospital Committee, but apparently without hurt, for he headed the poll. The voting was: Crews, 1,683; Hole, 1,619; Forbes, 1,507 (all elected); Chapman, 1,504; Michie, 1,461; Spurr, 1,436. Cr. Crews, in returning thanks, stated that the loan ballot should have been taken for and against, and not against the loan only. Had that been done the loan would have been vetoed three to one. On the other hand, it was contended that the result of the election was not governed by the loan or no loan proposal, as that question was already settled. The relative positions on the poll were said to be brought about by the ratepayers' personal prejudices or preferences for the candidates.

The Anti-Loanite councillors were in the minority so far as affecting the march of events, but with Cr. Crews as their leader they sought, and for a long time in vain, to obtain particulars of the land purchased. Cr. Crews was very bitter about the concealment of what had been done, information, he properly contended, the ratepayers were entitled to have. Eventually a return

was placed on the Council table, showing that the Council had purchased four acres of land in High Street East, near the Wesleyan Church (the Victoria Gardens), for £5,660. This land was offered for sale by public auction, on Thursday, July 22, 1884, by John Buchan and Co. The auctioneers were instructed by William Taylor and Archibald Fiskien, trustees in the estate of the late Andrew Russell. The competition for ownership was keen. In the end the land was acquired for the Council by the Mayor, Cr. Templeton, and Cr. Arkle. One would-be buyer declared his intention, if successful, to run a street through the block to Murray Street. The city would have lost the land only the Mayor and his colleague went beyond the reserve price the Council authorised them to bid by £500. Russell, when alive, it is said, was an absentee in England, and he had not exercised any of the statutory powers of ownership. A cow owner had fenced the land with a post and two rail fence, and enjoyed undisturbed possession for years. He was within a few months of becoming the owner by effluxion of time, when Russell, dying in England, an order came out to his executors to sell the property. The official return of properties bought also showed that the Orrong Potteries (now Toorak Park),  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres, were purchased for £2,300; the excavation in this land, where the potters' clay came from, was three or four times as large as the Alfred Graving Dock. Another piece of land, 80 by 264 feet, in Orrong Road, £480; land at the corner of Fulton Street and Orrong Road, 130 by 100 feet, £550. The total cost of the lands so purchased was £8,990.

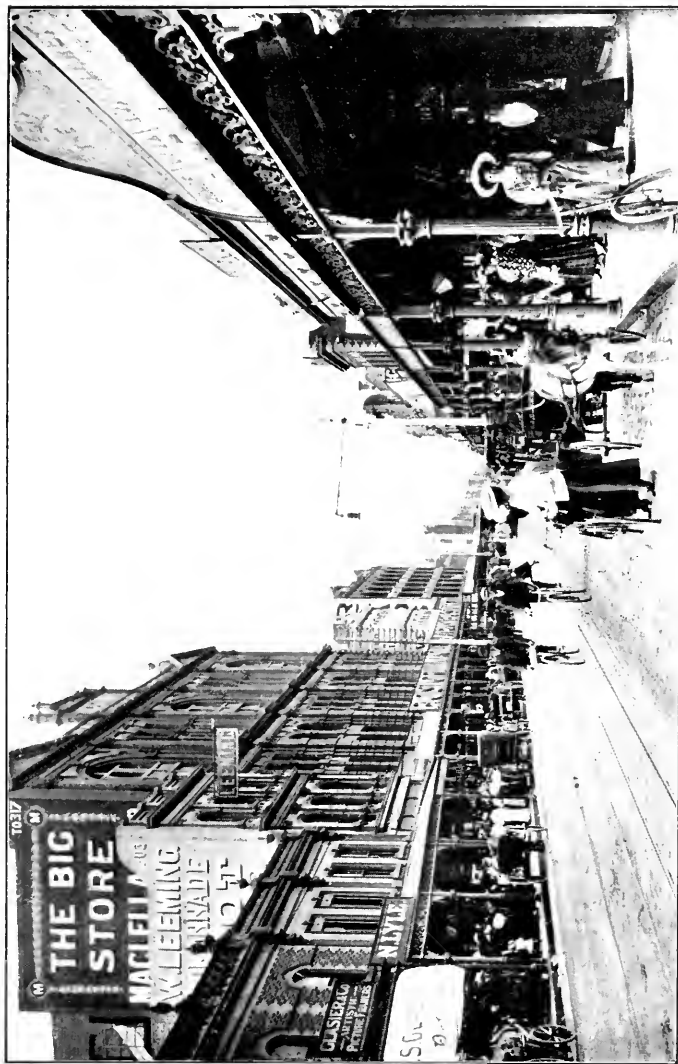
A further allotment, called Annand's estate, was bought for £1,000. It had 160 feet frontage to Grattan Street, by a depth of 123 feet, and now forms a portion of Grattan Street Gardens. It happened to be opposite to Cr. Arkle's property, he being Cr. Crews's partner. At the Council table, Cr. Crews denounced the purchase of Annand's land as "the greatest piece of jobbery of them all." The remark caused a great sensation, and more so when, on being called upon to withdraw the words, Cr. Crews refused to do so. In the end a police court prosecution was launched against Cr. Crews: Town Clerk of Prahran, *Albert L. Ely v. J. B. Crews*, councillor of Prahran, "for using grossly offensive language, and refusing to apologise, viz., 'that this is the greatest piece of jobbery of them all.'" The case was heard on March 23, 1885, Mr. J. C. Turner prosecuting for the Council, and Mr. Jas. McKean appearing for the defence. It occupied the best part of a day, and resulted in the defendant, Crews, being fined 1/-, with £3/3/- costs, Cr. Crews stating that he did not impute jobbery personally to any councillor, but applied the word collectively. He probably gained what was desired by his party at the time, information as to the names of particular councillors who were engaged in each purchase, news that was elicited under cross-examination. On August 5 of the same year the first public gardens in Prahran were opened, Sir Henry B. and Lady Loch being present. The occasion was made one of general rejoicing throughout Prahran, there being a procession from Punt Road, where the Vice-Regal party entered the municipal boundary. The procession was mar-

shalled to the Victoria Gardens by Mr. William Davies, who afterwards became a councillor, and subsequently Mayor, in 1893-4. His father was one of Prahran's early men, and the son has been prominent in later years by full-hearted citizenship. The school children were entertained by the Mayor, and in the evening a torchlight procession took place. Lady Loch declared the gardens and park lands open in the following words:—

“I declare the lands of the City of Prahran, known as the Toorak Park, the Victoria Gardens, and the Prahran Reserve, dedicated to public use and enjoyment as pleasure grounds and places of recreation.”

In the elections that followed (August 13, 1885), eight days after the opening of the gardens, the ratepayers endorsed the Council's decision to purchase lands, by casting the largest number of votes that had been polled in a Prahran municipal election. The three retiring councillors, including the Mayor, were returned at the head of the poll. The voting was: Taylor (Mayor), 2,398; Arkle, 2,194; Bowen, 2,093; Beatty, 1,451; Young, 1,245; Parker, 955; Harrison, 844.

The action of the Council in floating this first loan of £12,500 for the purpose of gardens, as seen in the light of to-day, was in every way commendable. The doctrines of “fresh air” and “lung spaces” in cities have been accepted in modern times as of the greatest hygienic importance, and as the first step for good or evil always leads to the final results, the importance of the civic fathers' firmness, in 1884, in resisting the opposing ratepayers to the loan cannot be overestimated. It has resulted in making Prahran a



Where Perth's Golden Wattle Grove stood Wattle Street on the west side  
CHAPEL STREET, LOOKING NORTH FROM THE TOWN HALL





pleasant abiding place. Beyond that, it was the birth of a bold and progressive policy that, steadfastly followed since, has placed Prahran at the head of Victorian municipalities as a synonym for enterprise in all that is best in municipal administration. The loan in question has been entirely liquidated, and the present generation of citizens is the possessor of a handsome legacy, without being called upon to contribute one farthing towards its purchase. Prahran's progress, since the days of swamp and fen land, humpy and wattle and dab huts, has always been steady, but the rise in Chapel Street land values is marvellous. Land that sold in the fifties, in Chapel Street, at one pound a foot, now seldom comes into the market, and when it does so, realises anything up to or over £300 a foot. The volume of business that must be transacted in Chapel Street to enable shopkeepers to pay rents and show profits on such capital values, must be, as undoubtedly it is, enormous. Prahran tradesmen, however, have built up a solid commercial reputation, and their fair trading attracts customers from distant suburbs. Year by year the growing demands of trade have required the erection of first-class shops, and the latter day buildings are all on the large size.

To-day the "Big Store" (an advance from the "Blue Bell Store" in a tent!) occupies a frontage of 120 feet to Chapel Street, and 200 feet to Wattle Street, covering a floor space of 14,000 square yards. Its business demands the employment of 550 hands. At the rear the building of the "Big Store" is continued, with a floor space of 6,000 square yards, and there 200 more employes are engaged in serving the wants of customers.

One man in the "Blue Bell Store" could attend to all the store's customers. Mrs. Darlot, sister of the late W. P. Firebrace, Prothonotary, states that the store was difficult to locate from her residence in Ivy Street, notwithstanding the tent's tall flagpole. Then Chapel Street was scarcely defined, and travellers along it were few. Now the crowd in Chapel Street on Friday nights is one of the sights around Melbourne, the roadway swarming with shoppers and promenaders, and the "Big Store" is a prominent Prahran land mark.

The second loan contracted by Prahran was floated in May, 1887, and it proved a successful one. Of the six tenders, that of the City of Melbourne Bank was accepted, at a net price of £105/11/6, which meant giving £105/11/6 for every £100 debenture. The minimum had been previously fixed at £105, so that the successful tender was 11/6 per £100 over what the Council asked. The total amount the Council received was £79,181/5/-, and for that the interest was £3,700 per annum. The City of Melbourne Bank (now defunct) placed the loan on the London market, where it was tendered for at an average price of £107/19/6. The Prahran Council expended this money principally on large drainage works. The third loan was not nearly so successful. It was floated immediately after the second one, in London, and the average price obtained was £98/8/1 per cent. The reduction of the rate of interest to 4 per cent. may have accounted for the lower tendering, but in the course of two years—1887 to 1889—money became scarce, and investors in England were acquainted with the sudden and

unhealthy inflation in the local property market, that culminated in the disastrous financial collapse of 1891.

A period of 16 years elapsed before the Council proceeded to any further borrowings, probably on account of the tremendous fall in property values, and in view of the extra burden the ratepayers would have been occasioned in respect to annual payments of interest and sinking fund. The fourth loan was floated in 1906, and underwritten by the firm of H. Byron Moore, Somerville and Day, for the sum of £101/5/- net. The City of Melbourne floated a £250,000 loan at the same time at 3½ per cent., which brought a little over £96.

In connection with this loan, and others subsequently raised, the Prahran Council has wisely taken advantage of a scheme provided for by the Local Government Act, of repaying debentures at regular periods of one year, and thereby reducing the amount of interest on the loan, after the first year of its existence. This fourth loan has a term of life of 34 years, and it is estimated that the municipality will save no less a sum than £13,000 in interest under this system of payment.

The Town Clerk, Mr. John Romanis, states, in his last annual report, 1909-10, that, "There is still £2,542 to the credit of the old Loan No. 3 (1889) account, but it is proposed to spend this in the new year in completing the reconstruction of Commercial Road West." He adds: "The sum of £6,182 was utilised out of Loan No. 4 (£55,000) account for drains, roads, refuse destructor and pleasure lands, leaving a balance still unexpended of £10,068, most of which will be required for the completion of the main drain between Chapel

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Street and the river, and between Surrey and Toorak Roads."

The Princes Bridge Loan, £10,000, has been liquidated to the extent of £6,253, and the balance will be repaid by 1918.

The River Yarra Improvements Loan, £4,000, has been reduced by £2,168, and payments will continue for another eight years before the loan is repaid.

The Council is also liable for the sum of £3,550 in connection with the regrading of the railway line at Armadale, and interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum is being paid on this sum.

On January 19, 1910, the Council resolved to borrow the sum of £10,000, at 4 per cent. per annum, for the following permanent works and undertakings, the largest item being for roadways, which was chiefly necessitated by the construction of the High Street Tramway, when it was considered advisable to reconstruct the borders and channels of High Street from Kooyong Road to the Prahran Railway Station. Two short portions of this route still remain to be completed.

- 1.—Making and paving roadways and footways.
- 2.—Machinery and plant for working stone quarry.
- 3.—Extension of municipal buildings and purchase of land for same.
- 4.—Purchase of street cleansing plant.

The debentures were taken up by Messrs. H. Byron Moore and Day, at £101/5/-, less 1 per cent. brokerage.

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## TABLE OF LOANS

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The following is an abstract of loans outstanding:—

AMOUNT OF ORIGINAL LOAN	DATE OF LOAN	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING	NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF BONDS	INTEREST		PRINCIPAL REPAYABLE
				Rate	Payable	
Consolidated— No. 1, £12,000 No. 2, £75,000 No. 3, £20,000	1899 9th October	1910 £83,080 9 6	Total £147,500	3½ %	Half-yearly 1st April 1st October	Consolidated— No. 1, 1st Oct., 1901 No. 2, 1st Oct., 1917 No. 3, 1st Oct., 1920 To be paid off 1st October, 1932
Loan 4— £55,000	1906 November	1910 £52,425 0 0	£100, £125, £150, £175	4 %	Half-yearly 31st March 30th Sept. at Town Hall	30th Sept. in each Year, from Sept., 1907, to Sept., 1940
Loan 5— £10,000	1907 December	1910 £10,000 0 0	88 Deb. @ £100 120 " @ £10 Nos. 1 to 208	4 %	Half-yearly 31st March 30th Sept. at Town Hall	30th Sept. in each Year, from Sept., 1910, to Sept., 1940
River Yarra Improvements— £4,000	1898 30th June	1910 £1,937 15 0	£4,000	4 %	Half-yearly 30th June 31st Dec.	Dec., 1917
New Bridge— £10,000	1887 January	1910 £4,159 8 9	£10,000	4½ %	Yearly 1st Jan.	Jan., 1918

Prahran's policy has always been one of progress, both from utilitarian and aesthetic points of view. Out of the £55,000 loan of 1906, floated for permanent civic works, £15,000 was earmarked for the purchase of new gardens. The Brookville, Malvern Road and Roekley Gardens, each about two acres in extent, were the outcome of that loan. The Victoria Gardens are intimately identified with the popular recreations of the people. A fine band rotunda has been erected, and weekly concerts, during the summer months, are given, the prices of admission being threepence for adults and one penny for children. In other directions the city has had the constant attention of successive Parks and Gardens Committees. Street ornamentation, by the planting of trees where circumstances of the traffic permit, has been freely undertaken. Picturesque avenues of trees grow in different parts of the city. The tree most in favour is the handsome Oriental plane, the English oak coming next in numbers. Elms and silver poplars are also in evidence, though their habit of suckering, and throwing out long roots, which have been found to extend 100 feet from the street, causes the trees to be regarded as unsuitable. Over 5,000 trees are planted in the streets of Prahran, the general width of the main roads being 66 feet. Their total length is 63 miles, and the principal business avenues, such as Chapel Street and Toorak Road, are paved with wood, somewhat different to the first days, when the flood waters rushed through them, and the early residents clambered along post and rail fences, and cracked the hoary Prahran joke about the first "rail road." Tarred macadam has been used in forming the roads to a

limited extent. The majority are macadamised with the basalt as already referred to as responsible for the northern boundary of Prahran. The stone is obtained from the Council's own quarries at Brooklyn.

In 1909 the City Surveyor was instructed to inspect and report upon suitable quarry sites, and on May 25, 1909, after inspecting a number of quarry sites in the neighbourhood of Braybrook and Footscray, he recommended the purchase of an area of 52 acres of land on the loop line of railway from Newport to Sunshine, having a frontage on the Geelong Road. This property was purchased by the Council at £35/10/- per acre. A modern steam-driven, stone-crushing plant was installed here, and a loop line constructed from the main line to the quarries, where the crushed and graded stone is delivered directly into the railway trucks, and transferred to the sidings at Toorak and Windsor. Since the opening of the plant, in January, 1910, the whole of the road material required for the city has been obtained from the Council's own quarries.

While we may regard the progress of Prahran with amazement, and recognise also the very important part the various Councils have played, we must also be alive to the truth that Councils come and Councils go, but the Town Clerk remains, at least in the case of Prahran it has been, for a considerable span of years. The value of a good Town Clerk cannot be overestimated. In the Biblical days there was the Town Clerk of Ephesus, and we have St. Paul's words: "After the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus," and in the same sense there were "beasts" to fight in Prahran's early days, as the first Town Clerk

and councillors found to their doing, and, sometimes, undoing. From Queen Elizabeth's time, at least, the Town Clerk has been recognised as the most responsible person in the internal organisation of the civic commonwealth. A charter of the virgin Queen specifies: "That henceforth for ever there may be, and shall be, from time to time, in the aforesaid town, one clerk, who shall be called 'our clerk,' of our heirs and successors, to make and enroll recovery of debts, according to the statute aforesaid." Prahran has been fortunate in its Town Clerks. John Craven, the first, saw the stress and strum of the early days; he acted for 26 years, and watched the place grow from a hamlet to a city; a bush track to a modern wood-blocked street. He obtained the position on the recommendation of the Hon. Wm. Nicholson, and the petition of 119 ratepayers. His parlour served as the first Town Clerk's Office of Prahran, till an old, damp brick building at the corner of Chapel Street and Cecil Place, at a rental of 12/- per week, was substituted. After that a room in the Mechanics' Institute was engaged, at £30 per annum.

John Craven was born on June 4, 1806, at Wakefield, Yorkshire, and died, March 7, 1891, after having resigned his position, owing to the infirmities of old age growing apace. Prahran's debt to John Craven is a great one, for he steered the Councils he saw come and go through many dangerous shoals. In every respect he was a man of principle, and a life-long abstainer. When Mr. Craven retired, the City Surveyor, Mr. T. B. Muntz, afterwards a Mayor of the city, acted as Town Clerk until the appointment of the late Albert L. Ely, on January 23, 1882. Mr. Ely was born at Crom Dwr,





GRAND STAND, TOORAK PARK

*Site of old Brick Hole and Refuse Tip*



*Picturesque Gate*

GREVILLE STREET GARDENS



Wales, on May 23, 1830, and died June 2, 1891. His uncle and cousin were both Town Clerks, the first of Ipswich, and the latter of Reading, England, while his brother, Professor Talfourd Ely, was recognised as one of the finest Greek scholars of his generation. Before being appointed to Prahran, Mr. Ely was Clerk of Courts at Wangaratta, from which post he graduated to Town Clerk of the same place. At Mr. Ely's death, Mr. John Hinde, the Assistant Town Clerk, was appointed to the position, Mr. Hinde, then but 28 years of age, holding the distinction of being the youngest Town Clerk in Victoria. Mr. Hinde is a native of Wolverhampton, where he was born in November, 1863. He early entered the service of the Corporation of Wolverhampton, in the office of the Borough Accountant. In 1882 he was appointed assistant Borough Accountant, a position he filled for five years. When he resigned his position and came to Australia he was given three months' leave of absence, and so it happened that at midnight, on March 31, 1887, he was an officer of the Wolverhampton Corporation, and on the following morning found himself selected Assistant Town Clerk of Prahran. Mr. Hinde, one of the best Town Clerks Victoria ever saw, left the Prahran Council to become secretary of the Metropolitan Gas Company, and he was succeeded by Mr. A. M. Mortley, on August 1, 1899. He resigned his position on September 24, 1907. Mr. John Romanis was appointed Acting Town Clerk on November 12, 1907, and the appointment was confirmed on September 1, 1908.

Mr. Romanis entered the Council as a youth, and has been brought up in the best traditions, under Mr. Hinde, of municipal government, which have always been distinguishing features of Prahran administration. He is the first Prahran native who has advanced to the dignity of Town Clerk of the city of his birth. In the rank and file of its officers, too, Prahran has been well served by such men as the late Mr. John Dick, receiver and paymaster; the ex-rate collector, Mr. H. W. Dean, now occupying the position of receiver and paymaster. He stands all day at the receipt of customs, while the revenue pours in in a way never dreamed of by the "first fathers." Prahran has had (and has) loyal officers in municipal office, and Prahran has valued such men. Some have been with the Corporation for years, such as the chief clerk, Mr. H. Wesslink; the rate collector, Mr. R. H. Bothamley; and that energetic and peripatetic officer, the senior city inspector, Mr. Henry Rider. His family has resided in Prahran since the early fifties, and his forebears' house is shown on early plans without another residence in its neighbourhood. Mr. Rider's retentive memory has proved invaluable in connection with some of the more personal phases of this work on the early history of Prahran.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**SOUTH YARRA SEPARATION MOVEMENT—DIVISION OF CITY INTO  
WARDS—MECHANICS' INSTITUTE—FLOODS AND FIRES—WINDSOR  
RAILWAY ACCIDENT—"TERRIBLE BILLY" AND THE BELL.**

THE smouldering discontent, and what may be termed the natal jealousy existing between South Yarra and Prahran, has, until recent years, been more or less in evidence. As far back as 1857, a petition, signed by 550 persons, was presented to the Governor-in-Council for separation from Prahran. The petitioners alleged that "South Yarra was too remote from Prahran to admit of petitioners sharing the benefits attending municipal institutions, such as post office, facilities for exchanges, Mechanics' Institute, etc., and that "the requirements of South Yarra, differing from Prahran, will be better fulfilled by residents than by strangers, intent only on the improvements of district localities contiguous to their own properties. South Yarra has been almost ignored, not having metalled or formed roads, nor the rubbish removed from them, and that horses, cattle, pigs, goats, etc., are allowed to roam at large, and commit depredations." This first attempt to divide what is now a large city was no more successful than other attempts that were made. The last agitation was the most dangerous, and, perhaps, the least justifiable of any previous ones. It took place in September, 1887, and owed its birth, in a large measure, to Cr. John Turner. He was an early Prahran resident, and

at one time was postmaster at South Yarra. During the time of his service in that capacity he was largely instrumental in obtaining the Saturday half-holiday for postmen. That act was his best performance in public life, as was this disloyal attempt to bring about the partition of Prahran his least creditable. His intention was, if he could have attained his ends, to have South Yarra and Toorak proclaimed a borough.

The Prahran *Telegraph*, a journal that has been always more or less careful and conservative in its allotment of blame, in commenting upon Cr. Turner's action as a public man, in municipal politics, said: "If he is sincere he must be pronounced one of the worst enemies the district has ever had to contend against, and it is surprising that he should attempt to benefit his own ends at the expense of a city which has made him what he is." By Cr. Turner's efforts a public meeting took place in South Yarra, Dr. Wooldridge presiding, on September 24. The substance of the would-be secessionists' talk was that South Yarra stood in the same relation to Prahran as a man to his mother-in-law, who it was not desirable to see too often. South Yarra, it was asserted, contributed half the revenue of Prahran, and therefore the extraordinary argument was used there should be a separate municipality, Commercial Road to be the line of demarcation. If the meeting could bring that about, South Yarra could have its own court house and municipal offices. Prahran owed South Yarra £25,000, and the municipal receipts of the proposed new municipality would be about £11,500. The new borough would have to float a loan of £25,000, and the Government would be

requested to provide a Court of Petty Sessions. To obtain severance, the petition needed to be signed by only 150 ratepayers, but one thousand ratepayers waited eagerly to sign the prayer. In the end, a motion was put and carried to the effect—

“That in the opinion of this meeting the time has arrived when that portion of the city of Prahran north of the centre of Commercial Road and Malvern Road should be severed from the said city, and contain a separate municipality, with a Council of nine members, under the title of ‘South Yarra and Toorak.’”

Subscriptions for the furtherance of the aims of the meeting were taken up, and the sum of £50 obtained, Cr. Turner subscribing £10/10/- to the fund.

Two legal opinions, read at a Council meeting, showed two barristers, who are now Supreme Court judges, arriving at strangely conflicting opinions. Mr. Hodges thought that the only part of Prahran to be affected by the petition was South Yarra and Toorak, and he considered that only ratepayers in those parts were entitled to protest against the severance. Mr. Hood’s opinion was that not only could the dissatisfied ratepayers of the part sought to be severed petition against it, but as the severance must naturally affect the whole of the city, petitioners from any part of the city might protest against the severance, and with good cause.

The Prahran Council, supported by the Prahran ratepayers proper, countered the South Yarra agitation by a public meeting, held on October 4, 1887, at which the ex-Mayor, R. Murray Smith, spoke against the proposal. The result of the formidable opposition of Prahran was to crush the South Yarra movement between the wheels of healthy, sane, and common sense

opinion, and the attempt at severance fizzled out; the prime mover, later on, being rejected by the South Yarra ratepayers at the ballot box. Another lion, however, arose in the pathway, that found no favour in the sight of the Council. Contemporaneously with the South Yarra movement there arose into activity, in Prahran, an agitation for the division of the city into wards. This agitation had really started in 1886, when a committee of about 35 ratepayers was formed to secure the division of the city into wards. Mr. Henry Furneaux was appointed honorary secretary. He is a native of South Yarra, and one who has more or less been connected with public questions of local importance in Prahran. He now occupies the position of secretary to the Mechanics' Institute and also to that dwindling body who are known as the Prahran Pioneers' Association.

The Wards' Committee, or its energetic secretary, obtained legal advice, and set the movement fairly on the rails of legitimate advancement. In a very short time the committee obtained 2,100 signatures in favour of the wards system, the number being 500 more than was required. The Council was caught napping, as its members believed that the movement had not within it the elements of success. At the end of December the Council seemed to awaken to the position that if it did not bestir itself the wards would be an accomplished fact. A committee of ratepayers, the anti-wardites, was formed, and a canvass was made for signatures to a counter petition. Notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts, the committee failed to secure one-fourth of the ratepayers, as required by the Act, to stay the

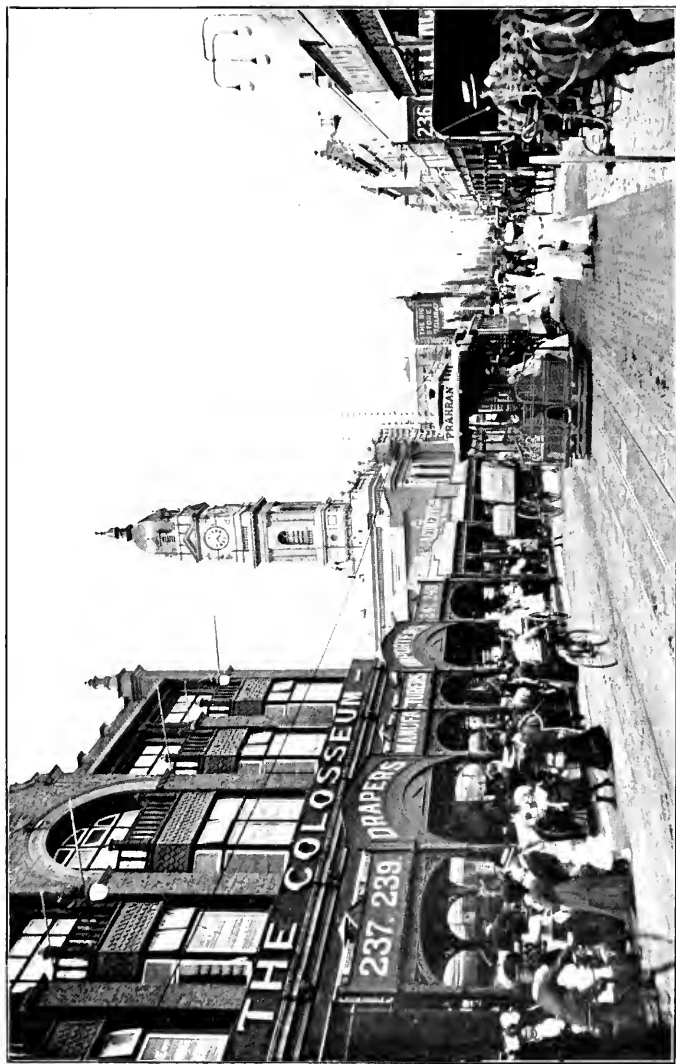


movement. Strength was attempted to be given to the opposition by a public meeting (September 22, 1887) in the Prahran Town Hall, the Mayor, Cr. John Beatty, in the chair, but an adverse vote was carried against those opposed to wards. At the meeting it was stated that, under the plan of sub-division, the rates were estimated at: Toorak Ward, £3,579; South Yarra Ward, £5,823; Prahran Ward, £5,654; and Windsor Ward, £5,399.

Each of the opposing parties was anxious to obtain the ear of the Minister of Public Works, the Hon. James Nimmo. The Minister was looked upon with suspicion by the wardites, and not, perhaps, without cause, for the history of the Prahran Council shows that that body, where ratepayers were at variance with the Council, usually enjoyed a full measure of executive favour. Both the contending parties presented petitions to the Minister. After consideration, Mr. Nimmo decided not to grant the petition for sub-division, on the ground that the proposed boundaries were not equitable, and that such a proposal "would prove prejudicial to the interests of the municipality." The ward party regarded Mr. Nimmo's verdict as most unsatisfactory, and contended that he had no right to challenge the "equity" of the division, that being a phase that the law gave him no power to deal with. Formerly such power existed under Clause 519 of the Local Government Act, but it had been repealed. It was also contended that the "small number" of ratepayers who were opposed to the division of the city into wards had no legal right to object, and that £20 was deposited with the proper official in order to test the

question, but the challenge was not taken up, therefore that aspect of the case was set aside. Further, the wardites contended that the Council had no legal right to be present, nor have any voice in the proposal. They claimed to have acted legally throughout, but though the law was on their side, the Minister had decided against them, and in making his decision he went beyond his legal limits. The Minister was empowered by the provisions of the 48th Clause of the Local Government Act to appoint one or more justices, by whom an inquiry "shall be held," and this course, it was urged, the Minister should have pursued. The wardites appealed to the Premier, Mr. Duncan Gillies, but he sent them back to Nimmo. The result of a further appeal to Nimmo was not only unsuccessful, but remained unanswered until too late to allow any further action, as no Order-in-Council could be made to take effect during the months of June, July and August. The wardites were very angry with Nimmo, and issued a circular, stating there was only one remedy, and that was an appeal to Parliament. In addition to other things, the circular said: "If the Commissioner's action is suffered to pass unchallenged, it may be made a precedent both by himself, in future cases, and by others succeeding to his present office, and the right of local government be thus virtually abolished."

At a deputation to the Minister of Public Works, the Mayor, Cr. R. A. Forbes, submitted the following interesting figures in opposition to the wardites. The Mayor said that the city had got on well under the prevailing system. In 1881 the population numbered



*"At the time of writing Chapel Street is nearly impassable."—Letter in 1856 from the Prud'hom Council to the Central Road Board, complaining of flooded roadway and numerous tree stumps.*

CHAPEL STREET, TO-DAY, LOOKING NORTH FROM HIGH STREET



21,380; there were 4,414 houses, 6,432 properties, and the valuation amounted to £189,776. In 1886 the population numbered 32,606, there were 7,171 houses, and 8,727 properties, the valuation being £368,398. The increases for the five years were: Population, 11,226; houses, 2,757; properties, 2,295; and valuation, £178,622. The rises of values for quinquennial periods were: 1870 to 1875, £20,300; 1875 to 1880, £52,500; 1880 to 1885, £98,500; the increase for the fifteen years being £171,300. The increase during 1886 was £30,000, making for the sixteen years a total increase of £201,300. The valuation was doubled in the last seven years, the population doubled in fifteen years, and the houses doubled in the last seven years. Although they had a small loan, the city was in a thoroughly solvent condition. Their rate was only 1/-, whereas the rates in Melbourne and suburban cities were as follows:—Melbourne, 1/4; Collingwood, 1/6; Richmond, 1/6, Fitzroy, 1/8; and South Melbourne, 1/6. The rates of suburban towns were: Hotham, 1/4½; Port Melbourne, 1/6; Williamstown, 1/9; and Brighton, 1/3.

The bulk of public opinion was in favour of the division of the city into wards, and the Council saw that it could not afford any longer to ignore the wishes of the ratepayers. In the end the Council gave way, and the city was divided into wards, the division being sanctioned by the Governor-in-Council in 1888. When the Council met for the last time under the old system that had served the city so well, considerable regret was expressed at the passing away of the old order of things. Cr. Arkle announced his intention of not standing for re-election, on the ground that, as he had represented

the whole of Prahran, he declined to represent a part. The *Chronicle* newspaper, which some years before had come into existence as a rival to the *Telegraph*, and which was founded as an advertising sheet by a printer named Tarrant, and bought and made a newspaper by Messrs. Wimpole and O'Donnell, two councillors and ex-Mayors of St. Kilda, had the following lines:—

“Chant the hymn, the Council's gone.  
Listen to our woeful song,  
Singing low and singing high,  
Osment softly pipes his eye.  
Parry sighs before the Mayor,  
Muntz and Forbes make a pair,  
Sobbing loud, as if not chary.  
While Turner shouts the *Miserere!*  
Chant the hymn, the Council's gone.  
Listen to our woeful song.”

A few days afterwards the city was in the throes of the first election under the system of wards. Great interest was taken; the whole city went electioneering, and the voting was very keen. The following results were obtained:—

Prahran.		South Yarra.	
Osment .. .. .	992	Edwards .. .. .	771
Ellis .. .. .	956	Inglis .. .. .	730
Parry .. .. .	906	Brown .. .. .	729
Madden .. .. .	851	Muntz .. .. .	637
Crews .. .. .	692	Chapman .. .. .	496
Windsor.		Toorak.	
Beatty .. .. .	1,131	Forbes .. .. .	559
Wighton .. .. .	1,053	Fuller .. .. .	500
O'Donnell .. .. .	705	Herald .. .. .	441
Edgecumbe .. .. .	325	Turner .. .. .	334
Kingham .. .. .	317	Wilkinson .. .. .	310
		Bradshaw .. .. .	218

It will be noticed that the veteran, Crews, was placed at the bottom of the poll in the Prahran Ward, while the ratepayers of Toorak and South Yarra had no use

for John Turner, who had tried to lead them into internecine strife over the separation of their districts from Prahran.

This agitation for wards, and the triumph of the rate-payers over the Council, was the last movement of any note that took place to change the city's constitution. True, there was a mushroom sort of agitation, an instance of the fickleness of ratepayers' opinions, to revert back to the full city representation, and abolish wards, but that movement fizzled out. In the same way an attempt to remove the Greville Street Railway Station to Commercial Road also went by the board. Ever since the municipality started, both ratepayers and Councils have at various times paved the road with good intentions. In 1865, the then Council announced its intention to erect baths in Greville Street, at a cost not exceeding £800, but that scheme, like many another, has "gang agley," and is now forgotten. In August, 1866, John Campbell, as secretary of a committee of burgesses in favour of the borough being divided into wards, wanted some information from the Council. Cr. Crews opposed the movement; in 1888 he supported it, causing the local paper to say: "The question of dividing the city into wards, in the hands of Cr. Crews, must at once be looked upon with suspicion as being more like a move to gain his own political ends than to advance the city." And so it was, and has ever been, and is in public life, the man in opposition is not to be trusted if the jaundiced eyes of the other side relax their vigilance for a day. Almost every step taken towards progress has been opposed in Prahran by one section or another, but the sum total

of such opposition has not been so great as to retard the city's advancement, and the Progressives have always triumphed in the end.

The seed of one of the beneficial acts that changed the old order to the new took place during Town Clerk Hinde's term of office, and one which he was largely instrumental in bringing to pass. When the Town Hall was built, in the sixties, it may be remembered that the library, in the Mechanics' Institute, was removed to the new building. From that time the Mechanics' Institute began a retrograde movement. The truth was, that there were two public institutions discharging practically the same services to the public, but in the case of the Institute it meant an annual subscription, whereas the Town Hall Library was free. In addition to that, the executive officer of the Mechanics' Institute was non-progressive, and the place was left in the backwash, going further and further into moribund paths, till its dry-rot state became a by-word in Prahran. Attempts were made to place the institution upon a proper footing, but without success. The Council was thwarted by the secretary, George Cross, and for a time his position appeared unassailable. In the end, an Act of Parliament was obtained (Act No. 1619, Prahran Mechanics' Institute Act), and the powers conferred therein enabled the Council to resuscitate the Institute into a living benefit to the citizens. The old building was extended and altered at an expenditure of £1,500, and on October 10, 1901, the ceremony of laying the memorial stone was performed by the Mayoress of the city, Mrs. H. M. Gooch, in the presence of a large gathering of citizens. The administration of the institu-



tion is jointly vested in the Council representatives and a committee of citizens. Under the secretaryship of ex-Cr. Furneaux, the Institute has now entered upon a prosperous career.

Prahran has had more than its full share of damage done by floods caused by the copious rains at the Yarra's watershed swelling the lower reaches of the river abutting upon South Yarra, but only once was a fall of snow recorded in its meteorological annals. On August 7, 1899, about 12.30 p.m., a heavy hail storm began, accompanied by a remarkable fall in temperature, the thermometer, which read 44 degs. at 9 a.m., giving readings then between 35 and 36 degs. About 1 p.m. true snow flakes fell for some minutes, melting, however, as soon as they touched the ground. Many a time during the winter months have the low lands lying along the course of the gully to the South Yarra railway bridge, now the main drain, been inundated. As far back as 1861 the toll house was damaged by a flood, the Council paying £135 to the lessee to compensate him for damage sustained. The most disastrous flood, however, occurred on July 12, 1891. Rain had poured unceasingly for a week before. Scarcely a house was dry. Brick walls on the weather side of dwellings were so saturated that the water ran down on the inside of the walls. Very early it was realised that the flood waters would inundate the houses in the vicinity of Chapel Street North and the railway bridge. The Yarra was running over its banks. Storm waters roaring down the main drain were dammed back by the swollen river to a long distance up Toorak Road. Warning was given to all the dwellers likely to be affected, but

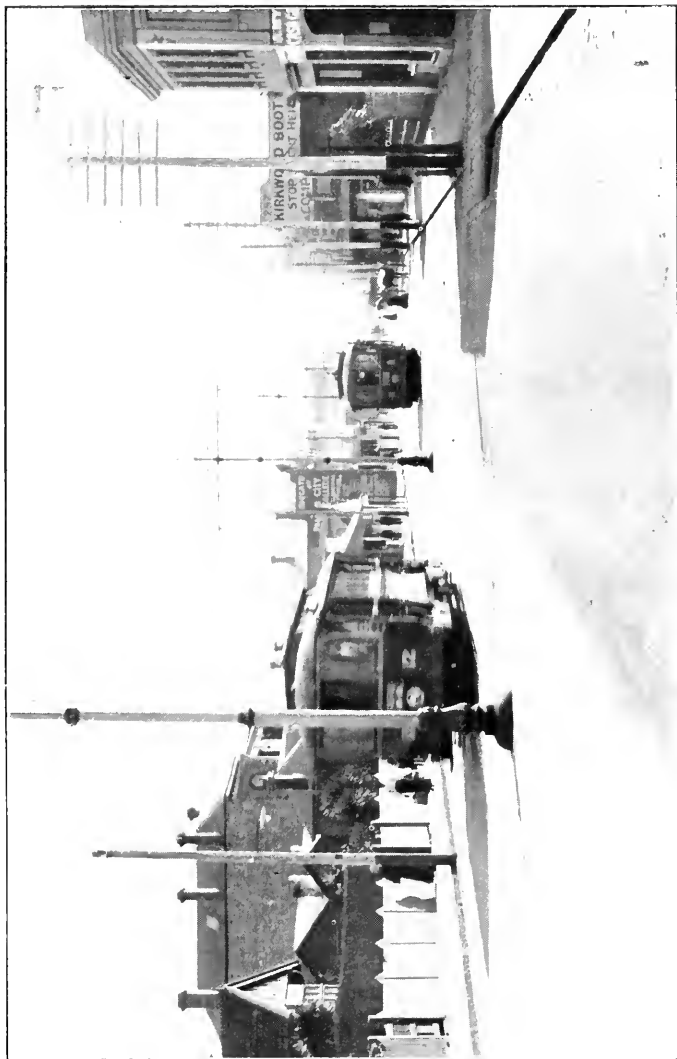
the waters came down with a suddenness that taxed the powers of the large army of volunteers who were effecting rescues of persons and property. In a night, 1,035 residents were rendered homeless. The Prahran Council rose to the occasion, affording immediate relief to the homeless. Of the number swamped out, 47 were sheltered in the Town Hall. In the School of Arts Room fires were lighted, blankets distributed, and impromptu shake-downs improvised. The Council provided food, while the public liberally subscribed money towards buying furniture and necessities for the unfortunate citizens. The Mayor of Prahran, Cr. Ellis, and Crs. Turner and Davies secured all the suitable houses "To Let" in Prahran. Families were housed in them; chairs, tables, kitchen utensils, blankets and such like comforts being distributed with a generous hand. The official return presented showed that the number of houses inundated by the flood waters were: In Clara Street, 29; Cunningham Street, 5; Claremont Street, 1; Cromwell Road, 6; River Street, 33; Naylor Street, 12; Tivoli Road, 35; York Place, 10; Karlsburg Road, 50; Toorak Road, 26; number of houses rendered uninhabitable, 207. The 47 people housed by the Council were entirely without friends or means. When the flood waters subsided the body of a young man was found in the room of a house in Karlsburg Road. He was alleged to have been drunk when the storm waters swept angrily along to engulf the dwellings. He refused to be warned, and perished alone, in the midst of the whirling tides. The effect of this flood was to hasten the widening of the Yarra, and the, till then, much-talked-of Yarra improvement scheme. In

February, 1911, a flood swept down the river, and the residents in River Street were flooded out. About a dozen families were afforded shelter in the Try Excelsior Hall. The rain gauge at the Town Hall indicated that 2.40 points of rain fell in thirty minutes. As before, the Council afforded the unfortunate citizens assistance, the then Mayor, Cr. John Rupert G. Nicolson, with the Mayoress, Mrs. Nicolson, keeping up the best traditions of the city for affording prompt succour in such cases. Towards the work of Yarra improvement the Prahran Council floated a loan of £4,000.

Prahran, in common with other cities, has had its share of fires. The most heart-rending fire took place at Gunn's stables, in Commercial Road, when a number of horses were burnt alive. The poor animals' cries of terror were appalling to listen to. They sent thrills of horror through the great crowd that gathered to watch the fire. The inflammatory material in the stables, straw, chaff and old wood, fed the flames that licked and leaped in angry exultation to the accompaniment of the agonised whinnies of the poor brutes, stall-bound, awaiting their dreadful fate. A calamitous fire started in Frederick Street, Windsor, on December 15, 1886. It commenced in the house of a man named Richards, on the eastern side of the street, while the family was out. A hot wind fanned the flames, and they spread in both directions, until five buildings on the same side of the street were consumed, and then the tenements on the other side of the street were ignited. While the fire was proceeding, although several fire brigades were in attendance, very little in the way of controlling the flames could be done, as the

water had been cut off from the mains. On the same night another fire broke out in Chapel Street. The fire in Frederick Street burnt wooden houses worth £2,500, besides furniture and household goods belonging to the tenants. The sum of £547/17/2 was subscribed by Prahran citizens towards the burnt out residents' relief. Mr. Joseph Rogers, a son of one of the earliest sergeants of police, and a well-known identity of the second generation, collected no less than £80/5/- towards the relief fund.

One of the most sensational occurrences in Prahran was the Windsor railway accident, which took place shortly before six o'clock on Wednesday, May 11, 1887, when the 5.40 p.m. express overran the 5.30 p.m. ordinary passenger train. On approaching the Green Street overhead bridge, on the Prahran side of the Windsor Station, the driver found the semaphore against him. He therefore pulled up in the cutting to await the signal, "Line clear," to proceed on his journey. After some delay the "Line clear" signal was given, but on attempting to release the brake a pipe burst, and the driver found it impossible to move the train. While he and the guard were trying to discover the cause of the blockage, the express, which left Flinders Street ten minutes after they did, dashed round the curve and crashed into the standing train. An awful scene of carnage followed, full of the horrors that usually attend such railway accidents. The noise of the impact could be heard in Chapel Street, and over 10,000 people were soon on the scene. Four persons were taken from the wrecked train, dead, and over 100 passengers were more or less severely injured.



*From Cattle Track to Electric Tramway*

HIGH STREET



Association with Prahran has, in the vast majority of cases, proved of benefit to the individual who was fortunate enough to be connected with the place in the early days. In three cases, however, the aftermath of fate was bitter. Men who enjoyed high estate and fortune fell from them, like Lucifer, never to rise again. The first was Hugh Glass, the partner of T. B. Payne in the early land purchases. At one time he was estimated to be worth £800,000, and yet he died bankrupt, and was even cast into the common gaol. That, however, was for the political offence of defying the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Peter Snodgrass, so intimately connected with early Prahran, and a man of vast wealth, lost all his possessions, and died a broken man in spirit and health. In a lesser financial degree, but much more tragical, was the career of one of the most fearless and extraordinary councillors Prahran ever possessed, viz., William Harrison, scarcely ever referred to in Prahran by any other name than "Terrible Billy." By trade he was a master builder, with some claims to be considered an architect. Enthusiasm and masterfulness were Harrison's leading traits. In the seventies some of the councillors were of the opinion that the firebell should be hung outside the Town Hall tower, but the majority opposed the suggestion. One day Cr. Harrison ordered a bell from James McEwan and Co., to be sent to the Town Hall, and, without consulting the councillors, he took possession of the tower, and with his own workmen erected a gallows-like structure in front of the clock dial, on the western side. Harrison stood on the scaffolding beside the bell, and, on seeing Cr. Arkle in Chapel Street, placed himself in

a pugilistic attitude, and defied him, much in the same spirit as Ajax defied the lightning. His action caused a row in the Council. The townspeople were scandalised at the indignity put upon the staid old tower. The clock, in shame, is said to have hidden its face behind its hands. Letters poured into the local papers about "Terrible Billy's" caper. They had no effect in the direction of chastening his spirit. He defied the Council to take the bell down, and it actually remained hanging from "the gallows" for some weeks. The Council would not pay for the bell, neither would Harrison, so eventually James McEwan and Co. took it back, without receiving any remuneration for its use. In August, 1886, Harrison contested a seat in the Prahran Council, but he had at that time lost his following, for he did once have a following, who admired his wild Quixotic spirit, ever tilting at municipal windmills. He only obtained 352 votes. After the poll he suddenly disappeared from Prahran. For some time his fate was a mystery. Finally it was ascertained that he had fled to Queensland. Then he returned to Melbourne, but did not visit Prahran. Not till two years after he had been buried from the morgue as a pauper, and entered in the "dead book" as an "unknown man," was the photograph of his corpse, taken at the morgue, recognised as the shell that once contained the unquenchable spirit of "Terrible Billy." He had been found dead in the Treasury Gardens, Melbourne. In many ways he was acknowledged to be a good and capable councillor, his reign extending over a period of nine years, his first appearance at the Council table taking place in 1871. He held his seat continuously (with the exception of 1878) until 1881.



## CHAPTER XV.

CATTLE TRACK TO ELECTRIC TRAMWAY — ARMADALE: WHY SO  
NAMED—ROAD MAKING—OLD CORPORATION TIPS—PRAHRAN  
REFUSE DESTRUCTOR.

THE municipal year 1909-10 was one of the most progressive and eventful in the history of Prahran. Cr. Edward Naylor occupied the Mayoral chair. He was born at London in 1851, and as a lad went to sea at thirteen, in Money, Wigram and Co.'s service. He was elected to the Prahran Council at an extraordinary election, on July 6, 1893, when, on the resignation of Cr. Muntz, he beat a Mr. Were by 145, his total being 627 votes. Subsequently Cr. Naylor was one of the Council's representatives on the Metropolitan Board of Works, and then secured the honour of Mayorship during the notable year when (October 20, 1909) the first rail of the Prahran and Malvern tramway was laid. Between Malvern and Prahran a close trade relationship has always existed. In the early days Malvern was given over to market gardens, and most of the market gardeners obtained the main bulk of their stores from Prahran. As the aspect of Malvern changed, however, and it became year by year more favored for suburban residences, a business thoroughfare sprang up in Glenferrie Road, while the market gardeners were gradually elbowed further afield. Inter-communication between Malvern and Prahran continued, and in the latter part of the eighties some cabs

ran at odd intervals to Malvern. These were succeeded by the Tramway and Omnibus Co.'s 'buses for some years, the cumbersome vehicles meeting with angry and daily criticism from passengers forced to travel in them. Afterwards the Government placed some motor 'buses along the road, but they were not a success. The ratepayers cried out for an electric tramway, which has come to pass. The inauguration of this electric tramway has been consummated after a very long series of negotiations. For many years efforts were made to bring the Prahran and Malvern Councils into agreement, but differences would arise, and transactions were abandoned. This occurred time and again, until 1907, when Councillor Upton occupied the Mayoral chair, a very determined effort was made to settle the differences which interfered with the progress of the scheme, and, finally, Mr. Alexander Cameron, who at the time was a member of the Malvern Council, and now the present chairman of the Trust, came forward with some definite proposals, which eventually formed the basis of an Act of Parliament constituting a Trust which should construct and manage the new tramway. The terms of the agreement were not settled without argument on both sides. Severe terms were imposed by the Bent Government in respect to the construction of the High Street bridge, and the necessary regrading works at Armadale, the two Councils being required to contribute the sum of £13,000 to such works. Such a contribution would have been quite unnecessary had the Government in 1878, when the South Yarra to Oakleigh line was contemplated, listened to the Prahran Council as to the

best route for the railway line to follow. The Prahran surveyor, Mr. T. B. Muntz, plotted out the line so as to branch off at the South Yarra railway bridge, and follow the track of the old gully, the main drain, crossing Toorak Road, and so ahead past Mandeville Hall, in Malvern Road. The latter was the residence of Joseph Clarke, and his influence, or that of his brother, Sir W. J. Clarke, is credited, rightly or wrongly, with swerving the line from what, from an engineering point of view, was its legitimate track. Moreover, the Government ignored James Munro's offer of land, low-lying land athwart the track proposed. That was the low-lying portion of the block J. P. Fawkner had purchased, on a portion of which now stands the Toorak Station. Munro wanted to cut up and sell the high-lying land, but the Government persisted in its own survey. That necessitated the excavation and cutting at South Yarra, and the embankments and road crossings along the line. The Railway Department had also to pay Munro £5,000 compensation for the land they took from him, when they might have had the low-lying land from him for nothing. Had the Prahran Council been listened to by the Department, and its undoubtedly wiser counsels followed, the trouble and expense about regrading, which arose when the High Street electric tramway was constructed, would have been avoided. Moreover, when the line was first built it ran into the Brighton line. After some narrow escapes from awful accidents, the line was reconstructed, and given a separate line of rails into South Yarra Station, and so rendered a smash up with the Brighton train impossible.

The official opening of the tramway line for traffic took place on May 30, 1910, the Chairman of the Trust (Mr. A. Cameron), His Worship the Mayor (Cr. E. Naylor), the Mayor of Malvern (Cr. W. H. Lewis), and Mr. J. H. D. Brearley, engineer, the wives of these gentlemen, and Miss E. Henley (Acting-Mayoress of Prahran) driving the first car over portions of the track in Prahran and Malvern. Many hundreds of citizens were invited to witness the ceremony, and the cars were given a trial run on the whole of the route. This is the first municipally-owned electric tramway system in the States. The line now open for traffic gives a total route length of  $4\frac{1}{4}$  miles, of which nearly  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles are double track. A double track is laid from the Prahran terminus along High Street and into Glenferrie Road. The extension beyond Glenferrie Road to Tooronga Road is a single line, Burke Road being a double one. The track is 4 feet by  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inch gauge; the rails used weigh 90 lb. to the yard. They are welded by the Thermit process. The bed for the track has been excavated, ballasted, and paved to a width of 19 feet and 8 feet for the double and single lines respectively. The hardwood sleepers rest on  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch ballast, which has been brought to within 3 inches of the top of the rails. A layer of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch ballast was then laid and rolled to within  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches of the top of the rails. The surface has been well finished off with carefully prepared tarred macadam.

Current is supplied by the Melbourne Electric Supply Co., from its power station at Richmond, to the Trust's sub-station at Coldblo Road, Malvern, as alternating current, at a pressure of 4,000 volts, where it

is transformed down by two motor generators of 100 K.W. each, installed by the Company, to 600 volts direct current, and delivered to the Trust at its 'bus bars through meter. The current is paid for in accordance with a sliding scale of charges arranged for between the Trust and the Company, the charge varying according to the amount of energy consumed and the price per ton paid for coal during the month of supply. For the period from the opening of the tramways to September 30, 1910, the average price for current was 1.4d. per unit.

Arrangements have been made with the Melbourne Electric Supply Company to instal an additional motor generator of 300 K.W. capacity. The capacity of the battery is also being increased by approximately 60 per cent.; the present capacity of the battery is 220 amperes at the one hour rate of discharge.

The total cost of the undertaking to date (including contribution to regrading railway line at Armadale, £13,000) amounts to £90,941/9/10. In accordance with Clause 18 of the agreement in the schedule to Act 2130, the interest and sinking fund upon £5,000 of the sum of £13,000 above referred to, is payable by the municipalities of Prahran and Malvern in the proportions set forth in such clause. The actual cost of the undertaking to the Trust, after making the above deduction, will therefore be £85,941/9/10.

The revenue account may be summarised as follows:—

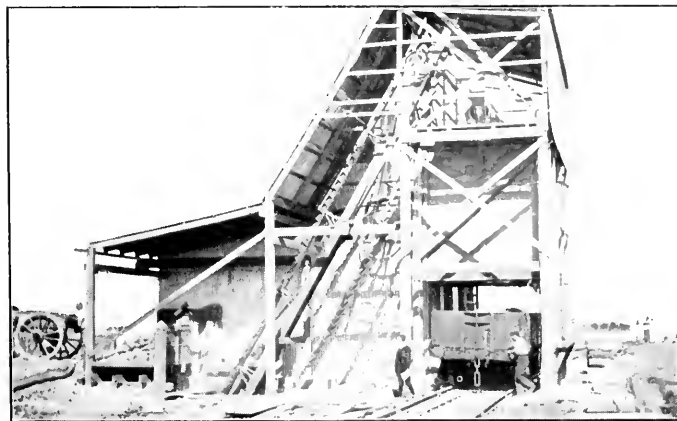
After paying out of revenue all operating expenses and interest on debentures from the date of the opening of the tramways for traffic, the Trust has been able to

set aside, out of the surplus profits, the sum of £212/16/6 for a Maintenance Reserve Fund, and the sum of £684/15/5 towards a Renewals Reserve Fund, and to carry forward a balance of £277/5/9, making a total of £1,174/17/8. The Renewals Reserve Fund has been invested by advancing same temporarily to Construction Account, which will be debited with interest at 4 per cent. per annum.

Coincident with the construction of the High Street Prahran and Malvern tramway four Councils interested (the Prahran, St. Kilda, Malvern and Caulfield Councils) have agreed upon a scheme for improving and beautifying Dandenong Road, that is now (November, 1911) in the course of progress. It includes the construction of a double line of electric tramway, the method of construction being similar to that adopted in High Street, with the exception that the space between the two lines of rails will be one foot wider than that in High Street. On each side of the space allotted for the tramway a cultivation plot 25 feet in width will be laid out, planted with grass and trees, and bordered with bluestone kerbs between the cultivated strips and the footpaths; on each side of the road a carriage way, 44 feet in width, will be laid out and paved with tarred macadam. The estimated cost of these improvements is £32,124, and the cost will be borne by the different Councils in the proportion of their respective frontages to the tramway. The construction of the tramway has necessitated the demolition of the old Dandenong Road bridge across the railway line. The bridge was erected in 1859, and consisted of wooden arches, fashioned, it is believed, out of red gum. The timbers, on removal,



THE COUNCIL'S BROOKLYN QUARRY



THE COUNCIL'S STONE CRUSHING PLANT, BROOKLYN





were found to be wonderfully preserved, possibly due to the free current of air always passing under the bridge, and their protection, by the decking of the bridge, from the weather. In the old bridge's place one of skew brick arches is being erected by the Railway Department, 75 feet in width between the parapets. The old bridge was only 40 feet wide, and was a relief from the first railway company.

Before the South Yarra to Oakleigh railway line was made a coach started from the Star Hotel, corner of Chapel Street and Dandenong Road, to catch the trains to Gippsland. A four-horsed Cobb's coach crossing the new bridge along Dandenong Road to-day would seem almost a vehicular anachronism; yet in memory of living men Dandenong Road was a bush, as was also High Street and Malvern Road. Mr. Thomas Tivendale, when a boy of ten, was bushed and lost for the best part of a day in his endeavour to reach Prahran from Malvern, along Malvern Road, so thick was the timber, so few the land marks along the route.

To-day, when the electric tram leaves Malvern, crosses Kooyong Road, and enters Prahran, it passes through the district of Armadale, which takes its name from Armadale House, the one-time residence of James Munro, whose father we know was the keeper of the first Prahran pound. James Munro lived to be Premier and Attorney-General of the colony, to be ruined by the land boom, and finally to eke out his remaining days as an estate agent in Armadale. In his days of prosperity he donated the land upon which the Armadale Bowling Green is situated, upon the express condition that no intoxicating liquor should be dispensed in the

club room. He was a native of Sutherlandshire, was born January 7, 1832, at Glen Dubh, and educated at the little fishing village of Armadale, hence his partiality to the name that now represents one of the favourite places for suburban homes in the city of Prahran.

In March, 1868, the Council was engaged in a long inquiry as to the relative values of machine and hand-broken metal. The councillors formed themselves into a sort of commission, sitting and taking evidence, as well as digesting reports received from other municipalities, and even appointed a special reporter, Henry Osment (afterwards Mayor) to take the notes. Amongst the witnesses the Council examined were Messrs. Willis, Lyons, Wm. Harrison, Wightman, Hutchins and John Wilson. Some experimental patches of metal were laid down. Then allegations were made that the contractors were not laying the metal so as to afford true tests of their relative values. Ill-feeling and abusive language ensued in consequence. The Council, in the end, left the verdict an open one, though the general opinion was that hand-broken metal was more suitable for roads. In the early days of the municipality the Council found material of a sort within its boundaries suitable for road making. The block of land extending from James's Place to what is now known as Gray Street, and from Chapel Street to the gully at the foot of Pine Street, contained a continuous deposit of ironstone, rubble and gravel. Many thousands of loads were taken out by and for the Council, and used on the streets of the town.

For some years past, in Prahran, tar paving has been largely employed, and its use is yearly being extended. This method of treating the roadways is the most efficient remedy yet tried in a practical way for dust prevention. The Council possesses three boilers for the distillation of tar. The tar, which is obtained from the Metropolitan Gas Company at a cost of 4d. per gallon, is, after treatment, conveyed to the roads in covered iron carts, with a furnace attached, and swept in by hand brooms. It is recognised that this work would be much more efficiently performed by means of mechanical sprayers, but so far no machine has yet been tried in Australia that has proved itself in every way satisfactory.

Prahran's footpaths consist of natural stone flags and tar pavement, the latter being most generally used. Owing to the rapid extension of the suburb, it was necessary to follow up the construction of new streets and buildings with a cheap form of footway, and tar paving was the most ready material. This can be laid at an average cost of about 2/- per super. yard. In recent years trial stretches of footpaths have been laid with mastic asphalte, which costs, in Prahran, about 9/- per super. yard, and is cheaper and more satisfactory than the natural stone flags, which cost about 12/- per super. yard. Experimental pavements have been made with destructor clinker. Within the past two or three years considerable areas of concrete pavements have been laid *in situ*, the latest footpath to be so paved being that on the west side of Chapel Street, between High Street and Commercial Road. It forms a clean smooth pavement, costing from 4/- to 5/- per

square yard, and is expected to be durable. Most of the streets are kerbed, the universal form of kerb being bluestone, the side gutters being paved with bluestone setts 6 in. deep, 9 in. wide, and averaging 12 in. long.

The purchase of land in Orrong Road, by the Council of 1885, served two purposes. The land had been excavated to a great depth for the clay it contained for brick-making purposes. The Council used it as a tip for the city's rubbish, and it so served for years. Gradually the hole in the earth disappeared, and opportunity was then taken to devote it to the purposes it was originally purchased for, that of a municipal garden. The Council was then faced with the problem of how to dispose of the city's house refuse, a very formidable problem, and one of the highest sanitary importance. The Council found it impossible to obtain a further tip area. The city's surveyor, Mr. William Calder, Assoc. M. Inst. C.E., was consulted with regard to the best means of disposing of the city's waste materials. He prepared some instructive reports, and the outcome of his labours was that the Council decided to send him to the Old World and America to investigate at first hand the more modern refuse furnaces. He was also authorised to select a plant suitable for Prahran's requirements. Mr. Calder left Prahran in June, 1906, on his mission. He inspected some thirty-five separate installations of different types of destructors. Eventually the tender of Messrs. Meldrum Brothers was accepted for a "Simplex" destructor of the front hand-fed type, arranged in two complete and independent units of two grates each. Each unit is provided with a combustion chamber, Babcock-Wilcox boiler of 1,470

sq. ft. heating surface, and regenerator, so that one unit can be closed down for cleaning and overhauling, while the other is capable of burning the whole of the house refuse in three eight-hour shifts. This was necessary owing to the location of the destructor, which is in a populous area, where the accumulation of refuse even for a short time would be highly objectionable. The tipping platform is 10 ft. above the clinker-ing floor, and is reached by means of an inclined road-way, with a gradient of 1 in 50, with bluestone retaining walls, and paving of bluestone setts. From the tipping platform the refuse is dumped into the refuse hoppers, each holding about one day's supply of refuse, which is fed by hand from the shovelling sill of the hopper direct into the furnace.

A third grate was added to the No. 2 unit on November 16, 1908, so that the refuse may be treated in two shifts of eight hours, instead of three, as at present. A special hearth has been provided for burning stale fish and offal from fishmongers and poulterers. This is arranged in such manner that the fumes must pass over the grates and through the combustion chamber before reaching the chimney. The chimney is 135 ft. in height, and the smallest diameter 5 ft. 6 in., lined with local fire-bricks for 65 ft. of its height, but the lining of furnaces and combustion chamber is composed of imported bricks, from Stourbridge, in England, as it was considered that they would not be affected to the same extent as the local bricks by the abrasion of firing tools.

There is also a Weir's boiler-feed pump of 1,000 gallons capacity per hour 10 kilowatt generating set, by

W. H. Allen & Sons, of Bedford, for lighting the works and approaches thereto, and clinker crusher, with revolving screen, for crushing and grading the clinker into four different sizes. This is driven by a Marshall vertical engine of 25 horse-power.

The foundation stone for the buildings was laid on June 10, 1907, by the then Mayor of Prahran, Councillor Flintoft. Refuse was first burned on November 12 of the same year, and the work has been continued to date.

The cost of the plant, which was erected by Messrs. Meldrum Brothers, was £8,500, the containing buildings, chimney stack, etc., being erected by a local firm, Messrs. Mossop and Pickersgill, for the sum of £3,100. The buildings for clinker crusher and inclined and other roadways, giving access to the destructor, cost £800. A 10-ton Pooley weighbridge was erected at an approximate cost of £100, making a total cost of approximately £12,500.

Realising that considerable surplus heat was going to waste in the burning of the refuse, consideration was given as to the best means of putting this to profitable use; bearing in mind all the conditions surrounding such an installation as a refuse destructor, the following desiderata were formulated:—

- (a) Before all else it should be recognised that the primary function of a destructor is to efficiently and thoroughly destroy municipal waste, the generation of electricity being a secondary consideration.
- (b) The consumer of electricity supplied from a destructor should not prescribe to the Council the rate at which electricity should be supplied, or the times when it should be available, and the ideal consumer was one who would provide as it were an electric sink, into which the

destructor could pour its by-product when and as fast as made.

- (c) The generating machinery must be so arranged that the output would automatically follow the ever-varying rate of steam production as closely as possible.
- (d) In order to save labour, the machinery should be as automatic and simple in operation as possible, so that the destructor staff could operate it without difficulty.

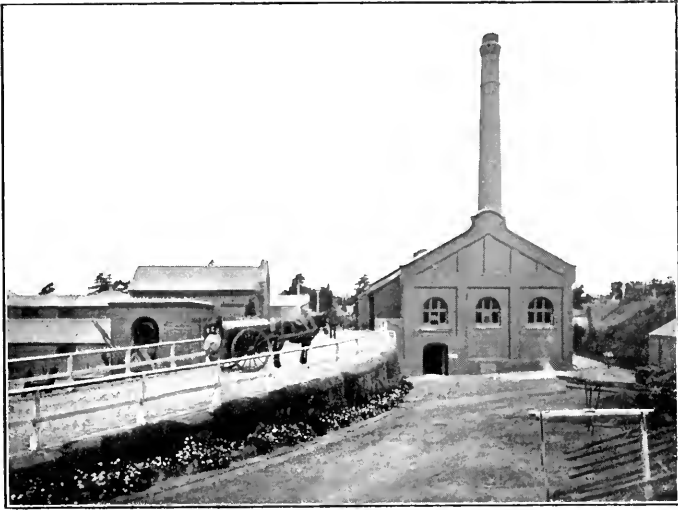
The ideal consumer was found in the Melbourne Electric Supply Co., and towards the close of 1908 tenders were called for an electric generating set to comply with the above conditions, viz., an Asynchronous generator, coupled direct to an Allen non-condensing compound engine of 185 h.p., the maximum output of the generator to be 125 K.W. These conditions were fulfilled by the tenderers, and the cost of the installation was £1,637/8/-. G. Weymouth Proprietary Ltd., of Richmond, Victoria, being the successful contractors. The plant commenced running on April 24, 1909, and since then to the present date it has been worked continuously without a hitch, the average daily output of electricity for the past two years being 1,294 units sold—exclusive of the steam used for the air-blast, pumps, clinker crusher, tar macadam mixers, tar stills, and the lighting of the works and stables adjoining. The revenue from electricity sold in 1910 was £698/17/11, and in 1911, to date (November), £808/9/7. The choice of this somewhat unusual type of generator has therefore been fully justified. A superheater has also been installed in one of the destructor boilers, the effect of that contrivance being an increased efficiency in steam production to the extent of 12 per cent.

The city refuse destructor continues to show excellent results under the capable supervision of Mr. Calder. The revenue last year amounted to £1,141, and the expenditure £1,262, a result that can only be obtained by careful and efficient management. The whole of the works at the depot are now lighted by electricity generated by the dynamo at the destructor, including the new stables, foreman's cottage, destructor building, entrance gates, etc. One very satisfactory feature of the work is the ready sale of clinker, over 1,000 tons of which were produced during the year. A total of 7,692½ tons of refuse was burnt during the year, being an increase of 360½ tons on the previous year. Notwithstanding this large quantity of rubbish treated, the destructor was only in use for about 12 hours out of the 24 each day, and that by only one unit, so that ample provision has been made for large increases of refuse.

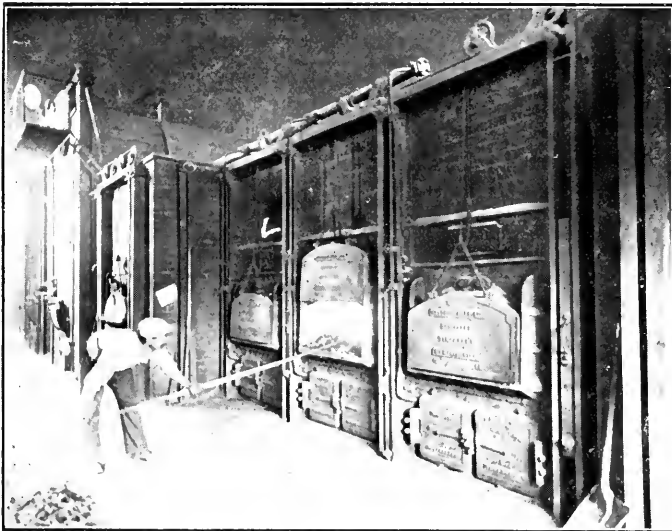
The number of electrical units generated and sold was 343,010, being 44.6 units per ton of refuse collected, exclusive of the power used for the Council's own lighting and works purposes, and not measured by meter. The revenue from electricity sold was £698/17/11.

The Corporation stables, commenced towards the close of last financial year, were completed in March, 1911. The building is constructed of clinker concrete, with brick door and window facings, loft floor of reinforced clinker concrete, roof of steel, with corrugated iron covering, floors of bluestone setts, with bituminous joints on a concrete foundation. The building contains





*General Outside View*



*View of Furnaces*

THE PRAHRAN DESTRUCTOR



16 stalls, 4 loose boxes, man's room, harness room, and feed loft. The work was carried out by direct labour, at a total cost, including lighting installation and sewerage connections, of £1,529/10/2. Fourteen horses were purchased at an average cost of £57 each, drivers and a stableman engaged, and since April 1 the collection and cartage of the house refuse and street sweepings has been done by the Council's own staff. For the accommodation of the stable foreman, a 3-roomed w.b. cottage was removed from the Council's property in Aubrey Street to a site adjoining the stable; two rooms and a bathroom were added to this by the Council's men, at a cost of £191, including removal, re-erection, sewerage connections, and electric light.

Prahran was fortunate in securing the professional services of Mr. William Calder, C.E., as city surveyor, in November, 1897. The city was then advancing rapidly, and if progression was to be maintained, not only was it necessary that a thoroughly competent official should be in charge of the works of the city, but also he should be a professional man, with that rare possession of great talent—brainy initiative. In Mr. Calder is happily blended the requisite qualities of the highest professional knowledge and practical craftsman's skill, with an artistic love of the beautiful, as may be seen in the handsome iron gate designed by him, placed at the end of Wattle Street, and presented to the city by Mr. John Maclellan. Mr. Calder's work in connection with the destructor, and the masterly utilisation of its waste products, is at present his municipal monument. From designing traction engines to sanitary rubbish carts, laying concrete pavements, or plot-

ting beautiful gardens, Mr. Calder's versatility finds interesting and ample scope. Without, however, progressive Councils, Mr. Calder's genius for advanced municipal work would have been shackled, and his zeal dispirited. Considering that, the result attained is like good wine, and as such needs no bush to those who know. From the Council to the Town Clerk; from the administration committees to the assisting officials; from the surveyor to the gardeners and labourers, the city is so well served that Prahran to-day is a source of legitimate pride to those who joy in being citizens of a by no means mean city, as well as exciting the wonder of admiring visitors who come to the city from the four quarters of the compass.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE CITY OF PRAHRAN—ITS WEALTH AND POPULATION—THE  
COUNCILS' WORK—THE LIBRARY—PORTRAITS OF MAYORS—  
CONCLUSION—SPECTEMUR AGENDO.

WE have now made the endeavour to trace the passage of Prahran from the days when the place was a Road Board District until the present time, when Prahran occupies the second position amongst the cities of Victoria. In the effort we have tried to "save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time." We have seen that the city did not arrive at its years of present prosperity without having passed through its dark months of adversity. We have learnt that though a councillor, or even councils, may be wrong, yet, in the end, wisdom has been found in numbers. "In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom." The Prahran Councils have triumphed. They have dominated the corporate soul of the city while the spirit of progress has permeated Prahran's highways and byways. Cities' characters accompany their advances as shadows attend the footsteps of man, but the ordinary citizen is the last to grasp the inwardness, the poetry or the prose of his city's life and his city's environment. For example, there is the pleasure-loving watering place, half-mermaid and half-siren, that lures man to indolence and lotus-eating. Then there is the busy city, where toil is ever moving, hither and thither, like the flying shuttle of a weaving machine

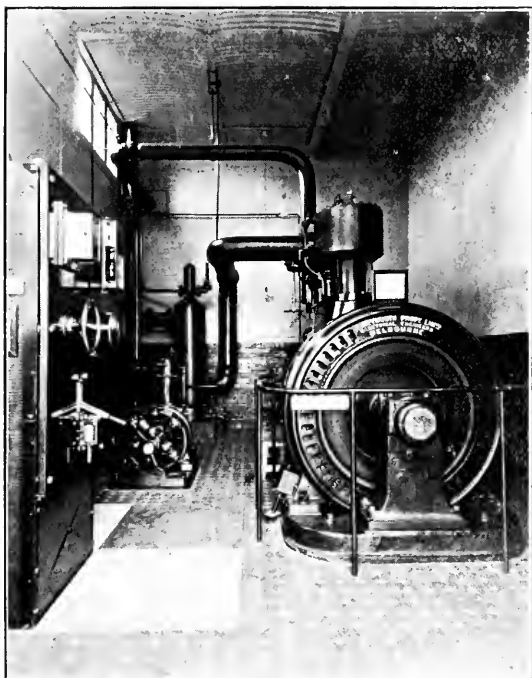
in motion. That is the city of action. Within its walls are men with strong arms; brows damp with laborious sweat and faces grined. Such a city is the embodiment of manhood in every aspect, in every sound, in every breath of its existence. Prahran is half-way between those two city types. Its pleasure gardens are full of allurements to the tired citizen, while in its marts, in its business places, in its factories, we find the masterfulness that has made the municipality good in the eyes of men. Its wealth would serve for a king's ransom, and that wealth grows greater year by year. The Council's freehold properties are valued to-day at £181,870. The valuations for the year 1910-1911:—

	1909-1910.		1910-1911.		Increase.
Toorak Ward ...	£85,321	...	£87,988	...	£2,667
South Yarra Ward ...	119,187	...	124,188	...	5,001
Prahran Ward ...	127,549	...	134,731	...	7,132
Windsor Ward ...	120,015	...	123,571	...	3,556
	<u>£452,122</u>		<u>£470,478</u>		<u>£18,356</u>

Prahran's population during the same period is returned at:—

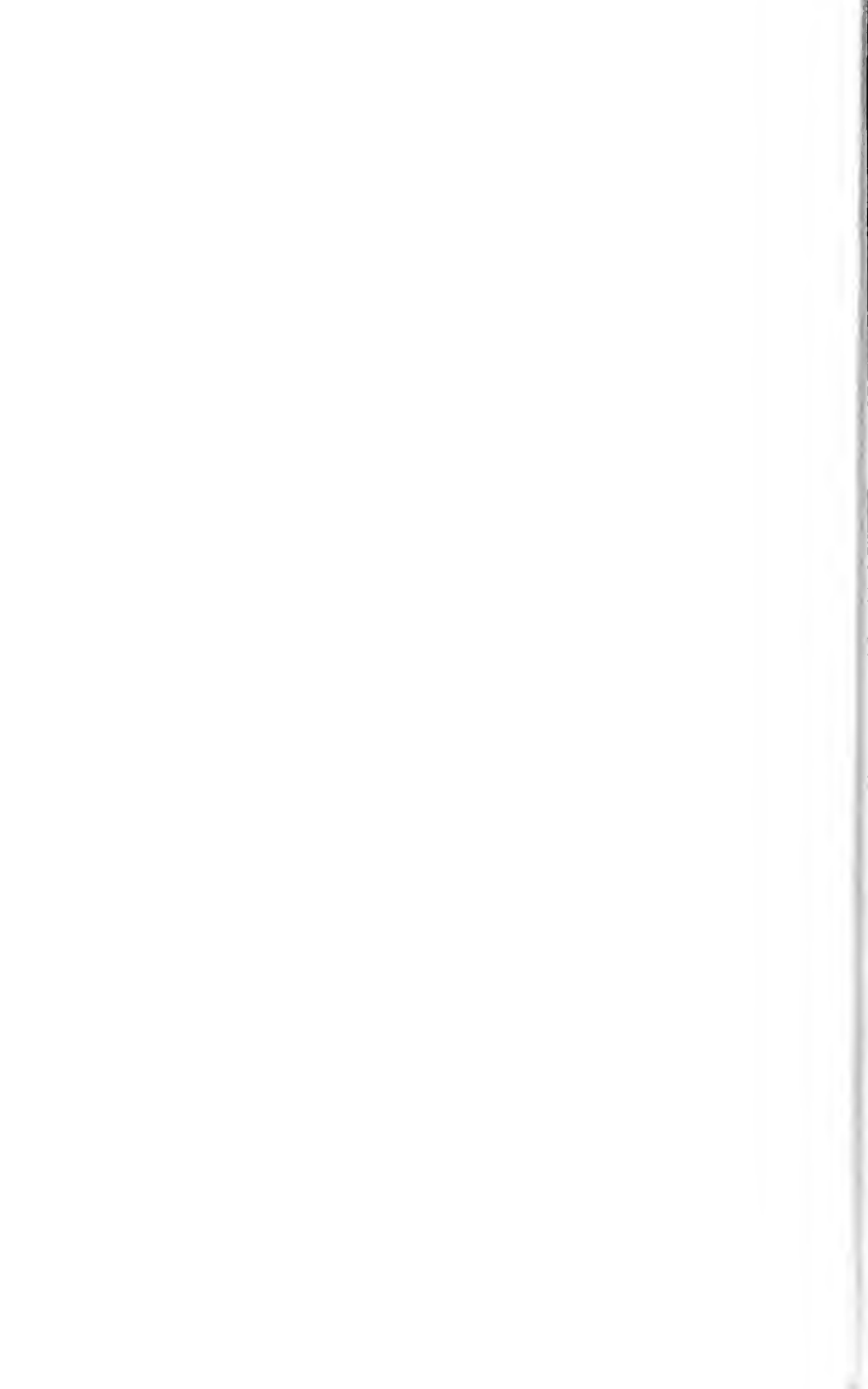
	1909-1910.		1910-1911.		Increase.
Toorak Ward ...	4,701	...	4,814	...	113
South Yarra Ward ...	14,688	...	15,191	...	503
Prahran Ward ...	13,561	...	13,969	...	408
Windsor Ward ...	11,700	...	12,088	...	388
	<u>44,650</u>		<u>46,062</u>		<u>1,412</u>

“The first settler” is lost in the crowd! Let us submit another instructive statement of population,



PRAHRAN DESTROYER

*125 K.W. Asynchronous Generator*





valuation, revenue, etc., from 1901 to 1910, just to see what "Poor Ann" has done in ten years:—

—	Population	Ratepayers	Annual Valuation	Revenue	Assessm'ts	Buildings
			£	£		
1901	41,161	8,954	364,796	35,449	10,248	8,854
1902	41,200	9,321	368,605	37,895	10,191	8,930
1903	42,000	9,556	381,916	37,345	10,225	9,000
1904	42,100	9,580	385,276	37,519	10,394	9,072
1905	42,300	9,775	405,076	39,508	10,400	9,210
1906	42,500	10,072	410,180	38,221	10,450	9,390
1907	42,700	10,024	430,495	41,321	10,578	9,500
1908	43,000	10,200	444,679	43,000	10,729	9,600
1909	44,500	10,374	452,429	44,500	11,000	9,750
1910	45,000	10,400	470,500	48,000	11,100	9,900

The work of the city is ever going forward. The executive officers and the Council are always moving in the direction of better works, newer improvements, and in securing all the up-to-date appliances necessary to maintain the prestige of Prahran in the forward position of the model city of Australia. In every municipal movement tending to the welfare of the citizens, Prahran will be found taking an active interest; its councillors on the committees, its officers seeking information. As an example, the care of infant life has had the Council's special attention. We find the Town Clerk, in his annual report to the Council, stating that—

"Splendid work has been done in this city through the agency of the Talbot Milk Institute, towards which the Council contributed £100. During the year 90 babies have received the special milk, the mothers in most cases paying the market price for it, viz., 2d. per pint, although the cost to the Institute is about 4½d. The nurses in charge of the district have taken con-

siderable trouble to keep in touch with the babies receiving the milk, advising mothers in respect to the general treatment of young children, feed, nursing, etc., and appended hereto is the report of the Institute respecting the city. The question as to whether this Council should undertake the management of a municipal dairy for the supply of pure milk for infants is certainly worthy of consideration, in view of the excellent results obtained from such institutions in England, France and Germany."

In the support of hospitals, in its yearly charity vote (usually about £550), in every direction that lies legitimately in the field of municipal enterprise, the Prahran Council will be found looming large. With the suggestion to erect a much-needed consumptives' home, the Prahran Council agreed at once, and then urged the conference of municipal councils to build the home without the least possible delay. The meeting was held on March 9, 1910, when Dr. Ham, chairman of the Board of Health, stated "that it was an undoubted fact that the advanced cases of tuberculosis were the ones from which the greatest risks of infection arose, and it was in dealing with these cases that the co-operation of municipalities was now being sought, and he was authorised to place before the conference certain proposals made by the Government, which he felt sure it would be admitted by all were on a most liberal scale; in short, he was empowered to say that, in regard to capital expenditure, viz., for buildings and furnishing, the Government was prepared to provide the whole amount required, viz., £10,000, and, in addition, to pay half of the £5,000 required annually

for maintenance; it therefore remained for the municipalities to provide the sum of £2,500 annually, being half of the cost of maintenance." The amount of Prahran's contributions to the fund will be £220, if the maintenance is confined to metropolitan councils only, or £204 if suburban area councils are included.

On the intellectual side of life's pleasures, Prahran has always sought to afford to its citizens facilities for self-culture and mental improvement. The Prahran Library is one of the jewels in the municipal crown. The room now used for library purposes was opened in 1878, and since then it has been extended, until it now measures 118 by 32 feet, thus making it one of the most handsome and complete libraries in Australia.

From the earliest recorded attendances we find that for the year 1867, 894 persons attended, making a daily average of 29. In 1880 it reached 165, and in 1890, 147; in 1909, 303; while last year (1910) the figures read—attendance, 108,573; average daily, 359. In addition to the above, the visitors to the library on Sundays, from May 3, 1903, to December, 1910, totalled 73,287. Up to the year 1903 a Government grant of a varying amount was received towards the upkeep of the library, but that has been withdrawn, and the institution is now solely supported by an annual grant from the municipal funds. There are now nearly 15,000 volumes on the library shelves, and regular additions are made in all branches of literature. The periodicals, which form one of the attractions to the many visitors, are carefully selected, and in this direction it may be interesting to quote the figures of those supplied. Monthly publications number 84, a

total yearly of 1,008; weekly 65—a total of 3,380; daily, 12—a total of 3,756.

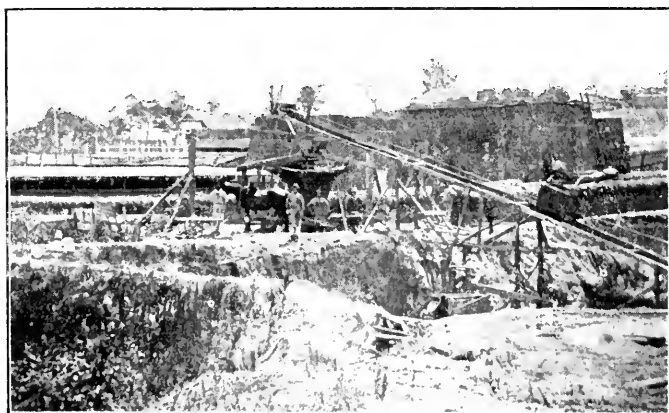
Electric radiators warm the library when necessary, and in every way the comfort of the visitors is studied. Lack of room, and not want of will, has hitherto prevented the Council from establishing a free lending library. When the Postal Department vacates the cramped office it now occupies, it is estimated, and hoped, that sufficient space will be available to allow the free lending library to come into existence. An art gallery, in connection with the library, was established in May, 1909, and pictures obtained upon loan from the Melbourne Picture Gallery and private citizens. Through the instrumentality of the present librarian, Mr. A. E. McMicken, a first fine art competition has taken place, and there is no doubt that in time this phase of municipal progress will be greatly enlarged. In other directions the librarian has stepped out of the ruck, specially so in the series of quarterly lectures given by University men and able Melbourne *litterateurs*, on subjects of interest, instruction and amusement.

Prahran's City Hall is one of the architectural beauties amongst the municipal halls of Melbourne. In November, 1886, the Council called for designs from architects for alterations and additions to the existing Town Hall premises. A premium of 100 guineas was offered, and the design selected was by Mr. Chas D'Ebro. In October, 1887, he was requested to prepare working plans, and in February, 1888, tenders were called for building the hall. The tender of Messrs. Furneaux, Besley and Angel was accepted, the price being



ORRONG ROAD REFUSE TIP

*Now filled in and reclaimed for Gardens*



BRICK YARD, CHAPEL STREET

*Near Toll Gate, 1860*



£14,236. This sum, as well as building the City Hall, included various alterations to the existing building, such as putting another story on the existing tower. In March, 1888, the contractors started their work. The foundation of the hall was laid on July 24, 1888, by the Mayor, John Beatty, J.P. At that time the voters' rolls of the city contained the names of 7,807 citizen voters. The capital value of the freeholds within the city amounted to £6,500,000, and the annual valuation of tenements therein exceeded £450,000. The freehold property of the Corporation was then valued at £101,750. The gross revenue of the year 1887 was £38,355; the total rating (exclusive of water) being one shilling in the pound. Prahran then had a total length of 59 miles of streets being public highways, of which length 54 miles had been completed. In the city there were 8,000 dwellings, and a population of 40,000 on an area of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  square miles. The City Hall was completed early in August, 1889, and it is a magnificent room, 100 by 53 feet in the clear, and 43 feet high. Its gallery holds 120 persons. The hall has also a spacious stage. The ornamentation of the hall is Corinthian, with massive coffered ceiling; the floor is laid with 4-inch kauri boards, secretly nailed. In this hall all the social glories of municipal life revolve, and the citizens become the guests of, and, in turn, entertain the Mayor, who is the living symbol of their city's lawful and executive authority. How wonderful it all seems! What changes the passage of years has brought! In the council chamber we look upon the portraits and oil paintings of living and dead and gone Mayors. What memories their faces conjure up! Some are robed;

some robed and chained. The Mayoral chain was first worn by Cr. Chambers, who occupied the Mayoral chair, on January 21, 1906. On its medallions are the names of most of the Mayors since 1856. The cost of each link has been paid by past Mayors or their surviving relatives. The chain is finished at the end with the monogram C.P.; the pendant is a massive oval, bevelled rim, with the wards of the city lettered in blue enamel; the centre is the seal of the city, enamelled in blue and red, the gift of Cr. Chambers.

The first mayoral allowance was made in the year 1890, Cr. William Fuller being Mayor, and the sum voted was £300. In 1894 the allowance was reduced to £200, to be subsequently increased by steps (1901, £300; 1906, £400) up to the present Mayoral allowance (1911), £500. The rate for the city when the Mayoral allowance was first granted (1890) was  $\frac{1}{4}$  in the pound. An increase, the first increase in the rate, had taken place the year before (1889), when the old one shilling rate that lasted from the incorporation of the Council until September 30, 1888, gave way to a rate of  $\frac{1}{3}$ . The rate attained its maximum in the history of Prahran in 1898, when it was  $\frac{1}{9}$ , to fall the following year to  $\frac{1}{8}$ , at which figure it remains up to the present date.

The Mayors were good men and true, to whom their councillors were loyal, as become the traditions of local government in Prahran. One of them emulated Dick Whittington, Cr. T. Luxton, for he sat in the Mayoral chair from 1894 to 1897, and once again in 1901-2. Several occupied it on two occasions, viz.:—



Crs. J. B. Crews, J. Wisewould, G. Young, W. H. Lacey, J. Harris, H. M. Gooch, W. Densham and S. A. Chambers. While the Mayors stand out prominently it must not be supposed that the councillors are lesser lights in important municipal proposals and work. For instance, ex-Cr. William Densham first advocated municipal tramways in the Council, and he is rightly termed "The Father of the Prahran Tramways." Ex-Cr. Skinner was chairman of the Prahran and Malvern Tramway Conference, as well as occupying a position in connection with the Yarra improvement scheme.

If we consider Prahran in a political sense, we find it has been made by interested parties, as far as electoral boundaries are concerned, a chopping block. One time it was tacked on to St. Kilda, and as a name had no political existence. At another stage South Yarra was parcelled off as a mere pocket-handkerchief electorate. Politicians for the most part have represented the various portions of the electorate—Toorak, South Yarra and Prahran—to their own satisfaction, but the result to Prahran as a municipality has not been of such moment as to warrant even passing comment. Yet some notable names are included in the roll, such as (1873) Robert Murray Smith, (1874) J. Wilberforce Stephen, (1871) Thomas Howard Fellows, (1870) Butler C. Aspinall, and (1864) Archibald Michie and J. B. Crews. Less notable, and more recent, are Matthew H. Davies, E. J. Dixon, Duncan Gillies, G. Downes Carter, and the present Toorak and Prahran members, Messrs. Bayles and Mackinnon. Politicians are, however, but as fleeting shadows when

compared with the stability of the Council and the life of the city. A whiff of current political favour has made them, just as a count from the ballot box may contain the verdict of their deposition. Not so the corporate body of the Council! It ceases not when time, death, or the ballot box decrees the passage of one of its members. The stream flows on in municipal life. Mayors come and Mayors go, but their influence often lingers as a tradition, or is active in some created and accepted precedent. So long as their pictures remain on the council chamber walls their memory has not vanished. The oil painting of the first chairman of the municipality, the late F. J. Sargood, hangs above the Mayoral chair in the council chamber. The almost speaking picture of the tall man, with dome-like brow, rooted with thought-knitted furrows into his strong administrative nose, deep set eyes, and austere countenance, seems to watch the present-day councillors in their discussions, much in the same way as he himself may have looked as he presided over Prahran's first Council's meeting. Those Councils of the fifties, and the following ones, blazed the track to progress. To win Prahran from the bush was a big task, and now that the pioneers' victory is our inheritance, we give them full credit for the toil they gave in other days. Prahran itself is, however, their monument! The Council's motto stands for posterity—*Spectemur Agendo*—"Let us be seen by our deeds," and so may it be!

# COUNCILLORS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRAHRAN FROM 1856 TO 1912

PROCLAIMED A MUNICIPAL DISTRICT, APRIL 24, 1855

1856-7	*F. J. S. Stephen	J. B. Crews
*F. J. Sargood	J. Thompson	J. Coates
J. Mason	W. H. Lacey	
Peter Snodgrass	J. Stodart	1861-2
W. R. Pye		D. R. Long
J. B. Crews	1859-60	J. Campbell
W. Oliver	J. Thompson	E. Chambers
Andrew Izett	J. Palmer	T. H. Fellows
	J. Coates	J. Goodman
1857-8	J. Mason	W. H. Lacey
W. Smith	J. Cunningham	*J. Wisewould
*J. Cunningham	J. B. Crews	
J. Palmer	W. H. Lacey	
F. J. S. Stephen	J. Stodart	
J. Mason	*D. R. Long	1862-3
J. B. Crews		{ *J. B. Crews
W. R. Pye	1860-1	{ *R. McClure
{ *F. J. Sargood	W. H. Lacey	{ T. H. Fellows
{ J. Thompson	*J. Wisewould	{ J. Coates
	D. R. Long	{ J. Snowball
1858-9	{ J. Mason	{ E. Chambers
*J. Cunningham	{ J. Phillip	{ T. Dickson
{ J. B. Crews	{ J. Cunningham	J. Goodman
{ W. Palmer	{ J. Campbell	W. H. Lacey

## PROCLAIMED A BOROUGH, OCTOBER 1, 1863

1863-4	J. White	1867-8
J. Snowball	{ W. Clarke	*G. Young
J. Stodart	{ G. Young	J. B. Crews
A. F. White	T. Dickson	C. F. E. Brown
*J. B. Crews	W. H. Lacey	*W. H. Lacey
T. Dickson	*J. Snowball	C. Ogg
T. H. Fellows	E. L. Vail	J. H. Knipe
W. H. Lacey	{ A. C. Fox	A. F. White
E. L. Vail	{ J. H. Knipe	R. M. Smith
	{ C. Brown	E. L. Vail
1864-5	1866-7	1868-9
J. B. Crews	J. H. Knipe	*W. H. Lacey
{ W. Clarke	J. B. Crews	*G. Young
{ T. Dickson	{ T. Dickson	{ J. B. Crews
A. C. Fox	{ C. Ogg	{ T. C. Wright
W. H. Lacey	*E. L. Vail	{ J. H. Knipe
*J. Snowball	{ J. Snowball	{ George Lewis
*J. Stodart	{ J. Widdicombe	Chas. Hipwell
E. L. Vail	*G. Young	John P. James
J. White	C. Brown	Charles Ogg
	W. H. Lacey	R. M. Smith
1865-6	A. F. White	E. L. Vail
J. B. Crews		
C. Hutchings		

## PROCLAIMED A TOWN, MAY 13, 1870

1869-70	1870-1	1871-2
*W. H. Lacey	*Charles Ogg	*George Lewis
*Charles Ogg	*R. M. Smith	H. G. De Gruchy
H. G. De Gruchy	H. G. De Gruchy	W. Harrison
Charles Hipwell	Charles Hipwell	Charles Hipwell
John P. James	John P. James	W. H. Lacey
George Lewis	W. H. Lacey	Charles Ogg
R. M. Smith	George Lewis	E. L. Vail
E. L. Vail	E. L. Vail	George Young
T. C. Wright	George Young	{ *R. M. Smith
		{ C. J. Lewis

# COUNCILLORS AND MAYORS

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1872-3	Joseph Harris	S. Willis
*George Lewis	Wm. Howard	George Young
*Charles Hipwell	Smith	
{ H. G. De Gruchy		1876-7
{ James Hole	1874-5	*E. J. Dixon
W. Harrison	*Joseph Harris	W. Bowen
W. H. Lacey	George Young	W. Fuller
C. J. Lewis	J. B. Crews	Joseph Harris
Wm. Howard	E. J. Dixon	W. Harrison
Smith	William Fuller	James Hole
E. L. Vail	W. Harrison	B. Waymouth
George Young	James Hole	S. Willis
	D. Ross	George Young
1873-4	Theophilus	
*Charles Hipwell	Thomas	1877-8
*George Young		*William Bowen
J. B. Crews	1875-6	{ Thomas Arkle
{ W. H. Lacey	*Joseph Harris	{ B. Waymouth
{ E. J. Dixon	J. B. Crews	E. J. Dixon
W. Harrison	E. J. Dixon	Joseph Harris
James Hole	William Fuller	James Hole
David Ross	W. Harrison	G. W. Taylor
Theophilus	James Hole	John Turner
Thomas	D. Ross	S. Willis
E. L. Vail		George Young

## PROCLAIMED A CITY, MAY 27, 1879

1878-9	1879-80	1880-1
*Samuel Willis	*Thomas Arkle	*James Hole
Thomas Arkle	W. Bowen	Thomas Arkle
W. Bowen	E. J. Dixon	W. Bowen
E. J. Dixon	W. Harrison	Alfred Brown
W. Harrison	James Hole	{ S. L. Chapman
James Hole	Thos. Kilpatrick	{ S. Willis
{ Thos. Kilpatrick	G. W. Taylor	M. H. Davies
{ John Turner	S. Willis	W. Harrison
G. W. Taylor	W. A. Zeal	John Turner
George Young		W. A. Zeal

1881-2	W. Bowen	James Hole
*M. H. Davies	S. L. Chapman	Robert Inglis
Thomas Arkle	Robert Inglis	G. W. Taylor
W. Bowen	John Turner	John Turner
Alfred Brown	A. D. Michie	
S. L. Chapman	T. B. Muntz	1886-7
A. D. Michie	G. W. Taylor	*R. A. Forbes
John Turner		Thomas Arkle
W. Templeton		John Beatty
W. A. Zeal		W. Bowen
	1884-5	J. B. Crews
1882-3	*G. W. Taylor	James Hole
*John Turner	Thomas Arkle	T. B. Muntz
Thomas Arkle	W. Bowen	G. W. Taylor
W. Bowen	J. B. Crews	John Turner
Alfred Brown	R. A. Forbes	
S. L. Chapman	James Hole	1887-8
A. D. Michie	Robert Inglis	*John Beatty
M. H. Davies	T. B. Muntz	Thomas Arkle
G. W. Taylor	John Turner	W. Bowen
W. Templeton		R. A. Forbes
	1885-6	T. B. Muntz
1883-4	*T. B. Muntz	Henry Osment
*William Temple-	Thomas Arkle	John Parry
ton	W. Bowen	G. W. Taylor
Thomas Arkle	J. B. Crews	John Turner
	R. A. Forbes	

## DIVISION OF CITY INTO WARDS

1888-9	Robert Inglis	W. Davies
Henry Osment,	Richard	{ J. S. Edwards
Mayor	O'Donnell	{ T. B. Muntz
John Beatty	John Parry	T. Ellis
B. G. H. Brown	James Wighton	R. A. Forbes
J. S. Edwards		R. Inglis
Thomas Ellis		H. M. Jones
R. A. Forbes	1889-90	H. Osment
William Fuller	W. Fuller, Mayor	J. Turner
D. H. Herald	{ J. Beatty	J. Watson
	{ J. H. Maddock	

{ J. Wighton  
{ G. E. Smith

1890-1

T. Ellis, Mayor  
W. Davies  
W. J. Edgcumbe  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
H. M. Jones  
J. H. Maddock  
T. B. Muntz  
H. Osment  
G. L. Skinner  
J. Turner  
J. Watson

1891-2

J. H. Maddock,  
Mayor  
W. Davies  
W. J. Edgcumbe  
T. Ellis  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
H. M. Jones  
T. B. Muntz  
H. Osment  
G. L. Skinner  
J. Turner  
J. Watson

1892-3

G. L. Skinner,  
Mayor  
W. Davies  
W. J. Edgcumbe

T. Ellis  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
J. H. Furneaux  
{ H. M. Jones  
{ T. Luxton  
J. H. Maddock  
{ T. B. Muntz  
{ E. Naylor  
H. Osment  
J. Turner

1893-4

W. Davies, Mayor  
{ W. J. Edgcumbe  
{ J. Finlay  
{ T. Ellis  
{ R. H. J. Fethers-  
ton  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
J. H. Furneaux  
T. Luxton  
J. H. Maddock  
E. Naylor  
H. Osment  
G. L. Skinner  
J. Turner

1894-5

T. Luxton, Mayor  
W. Davies  
R. H. J. Fethers-  
ton  
{ J. Finlay  
{ A. J. Nyulasy  
R. A. Forbes

W. Fuller  
J. H. Furneaux  
J. H. Maddock  
E. Naylor  
H. Osment  
G. L. Skinner  
J. Turner

1895-6

T. Luxton, Mayor  
W. Davies  
R. H. J. Fethers-  
ton  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
J. H. Furneaux  
J. H. Maddock  
E. Naylor  
{ A. J. Nyulasy  
{ J. Doeg  
H. Osment  
G. L. Skinner  
J. Turner

1896-7

T. Luxton, Mayor  
W. Davies  
J. Doeg  
R. H. J. Fethers-  
ton  
R. A. Forbes  
W. Fuller  
J. H. Furneaux  
J. H. Maddock  
E. Naylor  
H. Osment  
T. Simmons  
J. Turner

1897-8  
 R. A. Forbes,  
     Mayor  
 W. Davies  
 J. Doeg  
 R. H. J. Fethers-  
     ton

{ W. Fuller  
 { G. L. Skinner  
 J. H. Furneaux  
 T. Luxton  
 J. H. Maddock  
 E. Naylor  
 { H. Osment  
 { H. M. Gooch  
 T. Simmons  
 J. Turner

1898-9  
 T. Simmons,  
     Mayor

T. Amott  
 J. Doeg  
 { R. H. J. Fethers-  
     ton  
 { S. A. Chambers  
 R. A. Forbes  
 J. H. Furneaux  
 H. M. Gooch  
 T. Luxton  
 J. H. Maddock  
 E. Naylor  
 G. L. Skinner  
 J. Turner

1899-1900  
 H. M. Gooch,  
     Mayor

{ T. Amott  
 { W. Davies  
     S. A. Chambers  
     J. Doeg  
     R. A. Forbes  
 { J. H. Furneaux  
 { A. M. Williams  
     T. Luxton  
     J. H. Maddock  
     E. Naylor  
     T. Simmons  
     G. L. Skinner  
     J. Turner

1900-1  
 H. M. Gooch,  
     Mayor  
 S. A. Chambers  
 W. Davies  
 J. Doeg  
 R. A. Forbes  
 T. Luxton  
 J. H. Maddock  
 E. Naylor  
 T. Simmons  
 G. L. Skinner  
 J. Turner  
 A. M. Williams

1901-2  
 T. Luxton, Mayor  
 S. A. Chambers  
 { J. Doeg  
 { W. Densham  
 J. J. W. Flintoft  
 H. M. Gooch  
 A. E. Langford

J. H. Maddock  
 E. Naylor  
 T. Simmons  
 G. L. Skinner  
 J. Turner  
 A. M. Williams

1902-3  
 W. Densham,  
     Mayor  
 S. Bangs  
 S. A. Chambers  
 J. J. W. Flintoft  
 H. M. Gooch  
 A. E. Langford  
 T. Luxton  
 J. H. Maddock  
 E. Naylor  
 G. L. Skinner  
 J. Turner  
 A. M. Williams

1903-4  
 W. Densham,  
     Mayor  
 S. Bangs  
 S. A. Chambers  
 J. J. W. Flintoft  
 H. M. Gooch  
 A. E. Langford  
 T. Luxton  
 E. Naylor  
 G. L. Skinner  
 J. Turner  
 H. Upton  
 A. M. Williams



1904-5	F. T. S. Dobson	H. Upton
S. A. Chambers,	T. Luxton	E. H. Willis
Mayor	J. Miller	
S. Bangs	A. Nathan	1909-10
W. Densham	E. Naylor	*E. Naylor, Mayor
J. J. W. Flintoft	J. R. G. Nicolson	S. Bangs
{ H. M. Gooch	G. L. Skinner	S. A. Chambers
{ J. Miller	H. Upton	W. Densham
T. Luxton	A. H. Williams	H. A. A. Embling
A. Nathan		J. J. W. Flintoft
E. Naylor	1907-8	H. C. Heyward
G. L. Skinner	{ H. Upton, Mayor	{ T. C. Kelly
{ J. Turner	{ F. T. S. Dobson	{ A. A. Holdsworth
{ F. T. S. Dobson	S. Bangs	T. Luxton
H. Upton	S. A. Chambers	J. R. G. Nicolson
A. M. Williams	W. Densham	T. G. L. Scott
	J. J. W. Flintoft	E. H. Willis
	T. C. Kelly	
1905-6	T. Luxton	
S. A. Chambers,	J. Miller	1910-11
Mayor	E. Naylor	*J. R. G. Nicolson,
W. Densham	J. R. G. Nicolson	Mayor
F. T. S. Dobson	G. L. Skinner	S. A. Chambers
J. J. W. Flintoft		W. Densham
T. Luxton	1908-9	H. A. A. Embling
J. Miller	{ F. T. S. Dobson,	J. J. W. Flintoft
A. Nathan	Mayor	A. T. Gunn
E. Naylor	{ *E. Naylor	H. C. Heyward
J. R. G. Nicolson	S. Bangs	A. A. Holdsworth
G. L. Skinner	S. A. Chambers	T. Luxton
H. Upton	W. Densham	E. Naylor
A. M. Williams	H. A. A. Embling	T. G. L. Scott
	J. J. W. Flintoft	E. H. Willis
	T. C. Kelly	
1906-7	T. Luxton	
J. J. W. Flintoft,	J. Miller	1911-12
Mayor	{ T. G. L. Scott	*H. A. A. Embling,
S. A. Chambers	{ J. R. G. Nicolson	Mayor
W. Densham		

S. A. Chambers	A. A. Holdsworth	E. Naylor
J. J. W. Flintoft	T. Luxton	J. R. G. Nicolson
A. J. Ginn	J. E. Morris	T. G. L. Scott
H. C. Heyward	Wm. Mellwrick	E. H. Willis

\* Denotes Chairman, or Mayor as the case may be.

{ Denotes last-named Councillor as having taken place of former  
through an extraordinary vacancy occurring.

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